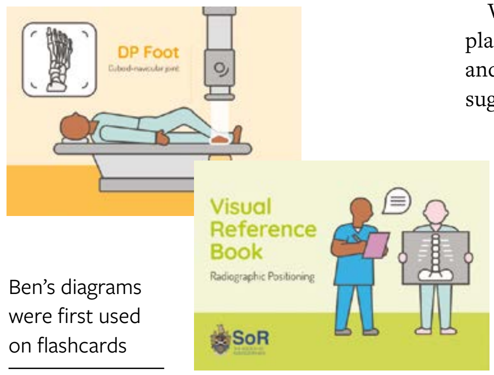
The correct position

Final-year radiography student **Ben Potts** explains how his experience of ADHD and dyslexia helped him create a visual reference guide to patient positioning

The visual reference guide is a booklet of simple diagrams of the patient positions commonly performed in an emergency X-ray department. It eliminates the need to read paragraphs of information and condenses each position to a visual trigger, which includes a diagram, centring point and tips or considerations. It is not intended to be comprehensive or to give students all the information they need to know but only to function as a reminder of the material they have already learnt or started learning.

It has been created for neurodivergent students and those who prefer or react better to visual rather than textual information. However, I believe it, like most things done in the name of inclusion, could be of benefit to all, so any student, regardless of their neurotype or learning style, may find it helpful.



Ben's diagrams were first used on flashcards

Background

I am dyslexic and have ADHD. One of the main challenges I experience is poor working memory. This means I can learn something and have that knowledge but I am unable to access it in a timely manner. I have heard it described as being a performance problem, not a knowledge problem. I like to think of it as having the information stored in a filing cabinet but briefly misplacing the key.

Interestingly, this has been shown to occur with information learnt by verbal (and therefore textual) means, but not with visual information. This is exacerbated by time pressure and so can be particularly troublesome in a busy emergency department. Personally, I experience this the most when I am learning but, once I have practised something a significant number of times, I am able to find the key quickly.

When discussing my placement support plan with my link lecturer, Danny Simone, and educational lead, Maria Reynolds, one suggestion was to create flashcards. They both agreed that they had benefited from this practice and Maria showed me her notes from her training. I decided I would create some for the patient positions I often struggle to recall.

Despite my lack of artistic prowess, I decided to share them on Twitter in case they would be helpful to others. They were well received and, from that point, I have worked with the Society to upgrade them into a professional resource. To confirm the accuracy of the diagrams, consultant radiographer Laurence Skermer was generous enough to check them for me.

As well as being useful in practice, I found that I have learnt a lot about positioning from creating the guide. As I am starting my final year, I am at the point where I no longer need it but I hope the guide aids others in their learning. ■

To order a free copy, visit https://surveys.sor.org/s3/Visual-Reference-Guide-Order

> **"As well as being useful in practice, I have learnt a lot about positioning by creating this guide and I hope it aids others in their learning"**

Simulation Champions update

Nicky Hutton and **Sarah-Jane Ketterer** reveal the findings of their investigation into the use of simulation in therapeutic radiography education

Nicky Hutton (far left)
Clinical team leader at Clatterbridge Cancer Centre
Sarah-Jane Ketterer
Lecturer at the University of Liverpool

Since the start of the year, Nicky Hutton and Sarah-Jane Ketterer have been working with the Society on secondment, funded by Health Education England, to produce guidance for the use of simulation in the education and training of pre-registration therapeutic radiography students.

Nicky and Sarah-Jane have undertaken a modified Delphi project to establish consensus opinion on the key areas for simulation use in pre-registration education to inform the new national guidance document. Here they explain their findings.

How does this fit with other SoR workforce projects?

The 2021 SoR Radiotherapy RePAIR project reported clear evidence to support further investigation into simulation, both the amount and types of that might be feasible and the timing of this in programmes. It includes understanding how simulation could be optimised and embedded in education and training pre-registration programmes, supporting the need for national guidance.

What is simulation?

Understanding of the term "simulation" varies, with differing opinions on the activities it covers. The following definition was agreed with the steering group and used throughout the project to help focus responses on a common understanding of simulation and associated activities: "Simulation is a technique – not a technology – to replace or amplify real experiences with guided experiences that evoke or replicate substantial aspects of the real world in a fully interactive manner." (Gaba DM. The future vision of simulation in health care. *Simul Healthc*. 2007; 2 (2): 126-135.)

Project summary

A multi-stage, mixed-method approach was used. This included an initial scoping survey of simulation provision, a consensus study using a modified Delphi research methodology and focus groups with key stakeholders.

The modified Delphi study provided consensus opinion on the priority areas for simulation within pre-registration education and training of therapeutic radiographers and the timing of these activities related to the individual level of the learner.

Responses to the Delphi study were received from a wide range of experts and key stakeholders, including 13 higher education institutions (HEIs), 38 NHS radiotherapy placement providers and five private radiotherapy centres.

The guidance document provides key recommendations for the effective use of simulation, including continuing and developing partnership working between HEIs and clinical placement providers, mapping simulation activities to learning outcomes and HCPC Standards of Proficiency, and the importance of using simulation models.

The guidance then outlines four overarching themes upon which educators should focus their simulation efforts to ensure maximum gain for student learning and experience: communication; treatment and imaging scenarios; radiotherapy treatment planning; and mandatory training. In each of these themes are the subject areas that reached consensus in the Delphi study, supported by evidence from the focus groups.

Supporting the guidance document are multi-professional case studies demonstrating how areas of the curriculum can be delivered via simulation, with the expectation that they are used as a guide and tailored to course programmes. There is a blank template to guide educators when developing new simulation activities, plus an appendix detailing the use of validated simulation models and the key elements required for successful simulations.

Next steps

The project has indicated the need for continued evaluation of simulation interventions to supplement the current evidence base, particularly in achieving learning outcomes.

There is scope for significant future development and collaboration in terms of sharing practice and collaborative research initiatives. Dissemination of simulation practice will be key to wider adoption and the use of forums, such as the SoR Simulation Special Interest Group, can be instrumental in providing a platform for sharing ideas and experience.

Simulation practice will continue to evolve as techniques and technology advance. It is hoped the guidance document and the supporting multi-professional case studies will act as a live resource, alongside the HEE simulation frameworks and networks, to support the development and enhanced use of simulation in the future. We look forward to sharing the guidance, which is expected to be published at the end of this year. ■