

From radiographer to entrepreneur

Neil Spence recently left clinical practice to set up an independent CPD website, CPDConference.org. He talks to Synergy News about his career so far.

After qualifying as a radiographer in 1997 Neil worked at Luton and Dunstable Hospital until November 2000. "During my time at Luton I got involved in education by training as an assistant student coordinator," he explained. "I also completed a course in IV injections and a certificate in management studies at the Open University."

In November 2000, Neil left to have a career break travelling around South America. On his return he still had the travel bug and started work as a locum radiographer. He explained: "As a locum, I was able to experience life as a radiographer in various hospitals around the country. This broad range of experience showed me there are different ways of practicing radiography."

It was during his time as a locum that he first started to realise there was a need to increase access to CPD activities. "There are many useful



radiography study days, but it is often difficult to find the time to attend them," he said. "Many study days are arranged locally, meaning that access to good CPD activities can be dependent on the region you work in."

Neil started to develop his idea for a solution in anticipation of the impact of Agenda for Change and the HPC's introduction of mandatory CPD. "My idea was to create an online service that allowed users to view videos of CPD presentations online or order copies to view at their leisure," he said. "This would open up CPD study days and conferences to a much wider audience."

After 10 years as a radiographer, swapping busy NHS hospitals for an office was a big step. "It was a huge undertaking," said Neil. "As well as setting the site itself up, there is a lot of work in publicising the site, setting up

quality assurance and getting the work seen by academics. Although it has been hard work, I am very pleased with the results. I hope it will be a useful resource and that it will encourage people to share information."

SoR CPD officer Sean Kelly welcomed the CPD development. "It is good to see a radiographer taking this kind of initiative," he said.

"The SoR is keen to promote online CPD – hence the launch of CPD Now – and members should consider all possibilities when looking for learning activities to record in their CPD portfolio. I look forward to further progress with this work."

To see the results of Neil's efforts visit www.CPDConference.org.



Award scheme offers financial support for small-scale research projects

Members of the SoR are urged to submit their applications for an award scheme, designed to provide financial support for small-scale research projects.

The awards are part of the annual RCR 'Pump Priming' scheme. The CoR collaborates with judging the submissions and

contributes to the funds for the awards. The deadline for submissions to the scheme is 3pm, 2 September 2005.

The area of research is not restricted although it is expected that it will have direct relevance to the development or practice of radiology or associated

specialties. The awards have seen some excellent submissions from radiographers in the past and organisers are keen that as many SoR members as possible consider whether to apply this year.

Visit www.sor.org/members/news/news139.htm.

'Bottoms up' GI study day

GI study day – 'Bottoms up!' – was a resounding success, writes Emma Hyde, superintendent radiographer. The event was hosted by University Hospitals of Leicester in the clinical education centre at Glenfield Hospital on 21 May.

True to its name, the day started with the rectum and worked its way up to the oesophagus. UHL consultant radiologist Shona Campbell kicked things off with an entertaining talk on proctograms. Mr Hemingway, a UHL colorectal surgeon, then spoke on water-soluble enemas – 'Is it blocked, can I cut it, and if so, where?' It was refreshing to know there is still a need for conventional screening rooms.

Advanced practitioner Jessica Davey from Torbay Hospitals shared her experience reporting enemas. Jessica has also trained to perform colonoscopy – 'the ultimate one-stop service'. Dr Jamal Abdulkarim followed with 'unusual pathology of the colon', after which UHL superintendent radiographer Nick Clark presented a case study on links between ischaemic colitis and cardiac drugs. An open forum followed, during which cross specialisation and barium enema reporting were discussed.

Dr Richards, UHL consultant histopathologist, presented on oesophageal cancer and the day was rounded off with two presentations on upper GI radiology. The UHL speech therapy team followed UHL consultant radiologist Peter Rodgers.

Many thanks to all who contributed, especially our honoured chairpersons, Bill Gidlow and Emma Hyde.