27th European

Ophthalmology Congress

November 26-28, 2018 | Dublin, Ireland

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Integrated eye care delivery (Scotland) and global ophthalmic education

The Scottish Eye Care Integration Project was funded in 2011 following a small pilot study in the previous years. The goals of the project were to achieve electronic referral of patients from primary to secondary care. The referral forms reflected the main categories of eye disease (cataract, glaucoma, macula, paediatrics and general). The electronic method of communication also allowed for attachment of images of both the anterior and posterior segment of the eye. Additionally other relevant information (computerized visual fields, OCT scan images) could also be attached to the referral. Each form had disease specific information that was required. Thus the glaucoma referral form required the fields of contact tonometry and corneal pachymetry filled whereas the macula form required near vision. Eight years after inception, Scotland has achieved 85% electronic referral. Waiting times have reduced. Patients are seen on the same day or within 1-12 weeks. Urgent patients are better screened by virtue of the attached image on the referral. Equally a proportion of patients are not seen as it is possible to make a virtual diagnosis of non-sight threatening signs. The images from the above referral system were gathered and catalogued by disease. Using these images a global virtual learning platform was created through the University of Edinburgh. Ophthalmologists and all other professions involved in eye care were given the opportunity to discuss clinical cases and arrive at the best possible diagnosis. We would like to present the results of the Scottish Eye care Integration Project and the challenges to delivering electronic technology driven ophthalmic care. We would also like to discuss the significant advantages of such systems for both patients and clinicians. An unforeseen result was the collection of real time ophthalmic images which contribute to global eye care education through a virtual learning environment. Such platforms have the potential to significantly impact global eye care education and subsequently improve the standard of eye care.

Biography

Roshini Sanders is a full time Consultant Ophthalmologist with special interests in glaucoma and cataract surgery. She set up a regional glaucoma service and training programme which has national recognition. She has published extensively (>65 publications, >125 presentations) in the fields of glaucoma, cataract and service delivery. As a result of this she have attracted more than £8 million for principal investigator and collaborative research in Scottish Ophthalmology and was appointed CSO specialty lead for Ophthalmology research in Scotland in 2012. She has chaired the SIGN guidelines for Glaucoma in 2014. She service delivery initiatives and expertise in electronic communication systems was supported by the Scottish Government and they implemented eHealth Ophthalmology across Scotland (£6.6 million service delivery grant from Scottish Government). This patient quality improvement was recognized by winning the Royal College of Ophthalmologists Award for Innovation (London, 2010). She founded the first online ChM and MSc Ophthalmology courses respectively, at the University of Edinburgh in 2012. These courses are internationally unique in their contemporaneous clinical content. Currently there is increasing student application and capacity with a growing module tutor group.

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Notes:

Journal of Clinical & Experimental Ophthalmology
ISSN: 2155-9570

Ophthalmology Congress 2018
November 26-28, 2018

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