

Impact of COVID-19 on Radiology Training in Australia and New Zealand

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Abstract : These The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in widespread implications for medical specialist training programs worldwide, including radiology. The objective of this study was to investigate the impact of COVID-19 on the Australian and New Zealand radiology trainee experience and well-being, as well as to compare the Australasian experience with that reported by other countries. An anonymised electronic online questionnaire was disseminated to all training members of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists who were radiology trainees during the 2020 - 2022 clinical years. Trainees were questioned about their experience from the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in Australasia (March 2020) to the time of survey completion. Participation was voluntary. Questions assessed the impact of the pandemic across multiple domains, including workload (inpatient/outpatient & individual modality volume), teaching, supervision, external learning opportunities, redeployment and trainee wellbeing. Survey responses were collated and compared with other peer reviewed publications. Answer options were primarily in categorical format (nominal and ordinal subtypes, as appropriate). An opportunity to provide free text answers to a minority of questions was provided. While our results mirror that of other countries, which demonstrated reduced case exposure and increased remote teaching and supervision, responses showed variation in the methods utilised by training sites during the height of the pandemic. A significant number of trainees were affected by examination cancellations/postponements and had subspecialty training rotations postponed. The majority of trainees felt that the pandemic had a negative effect on their training. In conclusion, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on radiology trainees across Australia and New Zealand. The present study has highlighted the extent of these effects, with most aspects of training impacted. Opportunities exist to utilise this information to create robust workplace strategies to mitigate these negative effects should the need arise in the future.

Keywords : COVID-19, radiology, training, pandemic

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