

We are in this together

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The subject invokes memories of a story I heard recently on the radio. A farmer decided to lay traps for mice in his farmhouse. The mouse heard of the plan and called on the farm animals for help, fearing for its life. Regrettably the cow, the pig and the hen stated very clearly that this did not involve them.

As it would happen the mouse was killed in one of the traps, and the farmer's wife, on seeing a dead mouse, got such a fright that she fell down the steps to her death. The hen had to be killed to make lunch for relatives who came to console the farmer.

The pig was sold to the abattoir in order for the farmer to purchase the coffin. The pig did not last a day and was slaughtered for bacon. The cow suffered the same fate so that the guests could be fed at the funeral. The moral of the story is that what may appear far removed from you may influence you directly.

The appalling state of equipment and service within the public service today is of great concern to us all. We have to train young radiologists in this art under very trying circumstances. It is my hope and prayer that none of us will be managed by a radiologist who is inadequately trained in certain procedures, for e.g. angiography.

The flip side of the coin involves hardships experienced by practitioners in the private sector. Colleagues have had to endure low tariffs and non-payment of services by medical aids and government institutions for services rendered. Again, this will indirectly have a bearing on people far removed from the coalface.

Radiation doses

It is of concern that while the radiology trainee has to undergo relatively stringent examinations in physics and the importance of dose reduction, it would appear that some of our colleagues in other disciplines need not concern themselves with these factors.

Clinicians use X-ray facilities with minimal if any protection for themselves, the support staff who work with them and the patients. Few, if any of the clinicians wear radiation badges for recording radiation doses. It is hoped that the Radiation Board or some government institution will take responsibility lest our population doses get out of control.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Professor Peter Corr who was awarded the Antoine Beclere Medal for service to radiology at the International Society of Radiology (ISR) 2002 Meeting, held in Cancun, Mexico. Professor Corr also delivered a lecture entitled 'AIDS, a global problem', which was highly acclaimed.

I am sure I am speaking for the South African radiological community in applauding his achievements, commitment and service to the greater radiological community and humanity.

Dr Jan Labuscagne is also to be congratulated on his re-election to the ISR Executive Committee at Cancun.

Dr Jan Labuscagne and Professor Raymond Glynn Thomas both delivered papers at Cancun. Congratulations and sterkte.

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Editor