



We are delighted to announce the launch of the North West Imaging Academy (NWIA).

In 2021, following the publication of the Richards Review for Diagnostic Services, a North West team, led by Health Education England (HEE), comprising NHS Trusts, Consultant Radiologists, Radiographers, Trust Workforce Leads, Universities involved in imaging education and training, Imaging and Cancer Alliance Workforce Leads came together to collaboratively design the model for a new NWIA supported by national funding of £2.8 million. The Academy comprises a consortium of delivery providers including NHS Trusts, Universities and the North West School of Radiology (HEE).

The model developed by the North West team has been praised by the national diagnostics team as being innovative, ambitious and designed to deliver the ambition of the Richards Review for imaging services.

“The NHS is facing one of its most challenging eras since its inception. Pivotal to how it meets these challenges will be how it maximises the benefits of diagnosing patients earlier and more accurately. To do this it needs a highly skilled imaging workforce, at the forefront of a technology revolution. The NWIA is already helping us to deliver higher numbers of trainees and Allied Health Professionals, delivering exceptional high-quality education, using innovative methods, and improving the learner experience.”

Dr Alistair Craig
NW Regional Imaging Clinical Advisor NHSE

Key drivers that informed the development were to address diagnostic throughput capacity, workforce shortages, new approaches to education and training, workforce transformation models, with the overarching aims of reducing health inequality and improving outcomes across all areas of the North West. Monies were awarded to span the range of imaging modalities and workforce development and enhancement through professional development.

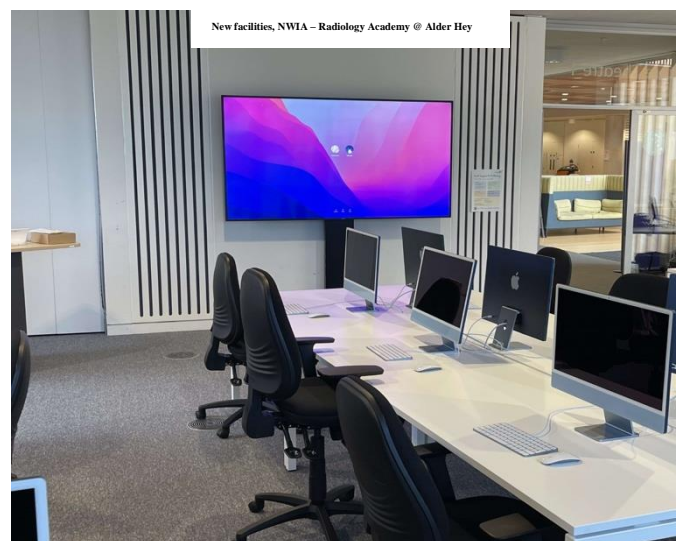
Initial objectives were to:

- support the expansion of radiologist training, improve teaching for ST2 and 3 and provide additional capacity for developing reporting skills;
- develop multiprofessional education for radiographers and wider professional groups;
- increase independent reporting capacity and instigate a process of accreditation to evidence the capabilities of trainees and reporting radiographers;
- lead regional standard setting for radiographer reporting.

These are our early headlines.

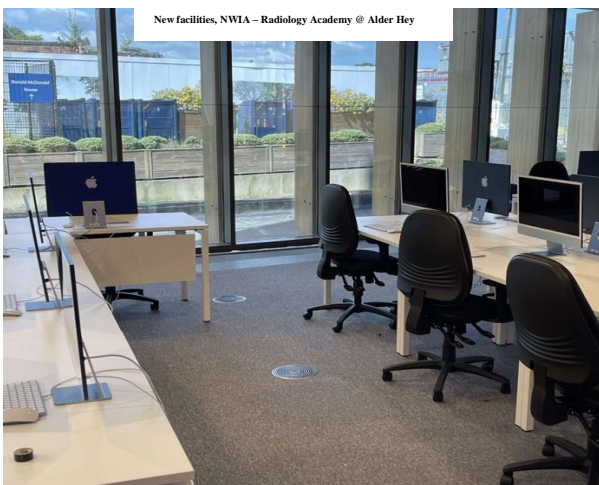
In August 2022, the North West School of Radiology (NWSOR) will see an increase from 33 to 39 Specialist Trainees (ST1) in Radiology, which is important for the growth in the future consultant workforce. Innovative approaches to dealing with placement capacity by having a 4-month placement approved by the Royal College of Radiologists at North West Imaging Academy @ Edge Hill University Medical School has facilitated this.

Both Alder Hey Children’s Hospital and East Lancashire Teaching Hospital were awarded funds to develop satellite education facilities that will link to the existing site at EHUMS. These additional Imaging Academy facilities offered will also provide enhanced training opportunities for ST2-3, allowing them to develop their knowledge and skills in more specialist areas of imaging more locally.



“Developing programmed specialty year group teaching across linked classrooms represents an innovation not solely within the New Academies construct but also within School of Radiology teaching nationally. Educators working within an interconnected learning network maximise their influence and cater to more learners. The initiative represents a potential exemplar in digital education that aims to compliment the learning experiences occurring within clinical placements. We hope today’s clinicians can become tomorrow’s educators so that today’s learners can become tomorrow’s clinicians.”

Dr Jana Suntharanathan
Head of the North West School of Radiology



“ELTH are delighted to host a prestigious NW Imaging Academy site – the Radiology Academy @ELHT. It enables us to be at the forefront of diagnostics training, facilitating the development of specialist knowledge and skills within the region and equipping the next generation of health professionals to deliver Safe, personal, and effective care to the Northwest.”

Dr Ruth Smith
Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist
Director of Medical Education
East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust

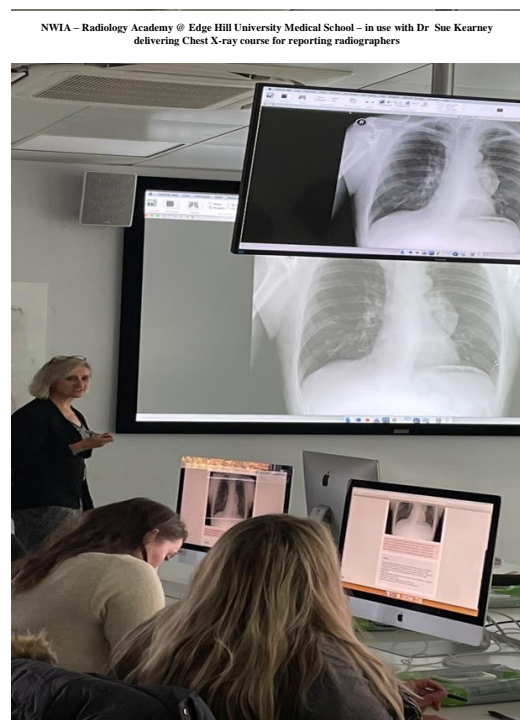
The Radiology Academy @ Edge Hill Medical School (EHUMS) has a well-established iMac lab, that is currently undergoing some expansion. Additionally, we are also investing in imaging software which will provide a cloud-based simulation environment for development of reporting skills and this is expected to be installed ready for use in the autumn. This will provide opportunity for all those engaging in radiology reporting to develop/enhance such skills in a safe, supportive environment, out with the traditional

hospital setting. The Radiology Academy @ EHUMS is working closely with NWSOR and the satellite centres to test the facilities with the aim of them becoming operational for teaching in November 2022.

As well as providing additional training capacity for radiologists, the Radiology Academy @ Edge Hill University Medical School will provide opportunity for clinical professional development courses for the wider imaging workforce. Early professional development courses identified as priorities to be delivered in year 1 across these sites are chest X-ray and MSK updates for reporting radiographers, early identification of lung cancer (Cancer & Diagnostics Priority), nasogastric tube location, paediatrics and ultrasound imaging for medics to cite a few.

“I am delighted to be part of this exciting development which enables the delivery of high quality multi-professional education in imaging across the NW. This allows learners to experience teaching in dedicated environments close to their workplace. The interlinking of these facilities allows this teaching to be delivered by experienced tutors from any individual remote site. I believe that this allows the equitable provision of teaching that will improve the educational experience for all imaging professionals.”

Dr Sue Kearney
Consultant Radiologist Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust & Clinical Director of the Radiology Academy @ Edge Hill Medical School

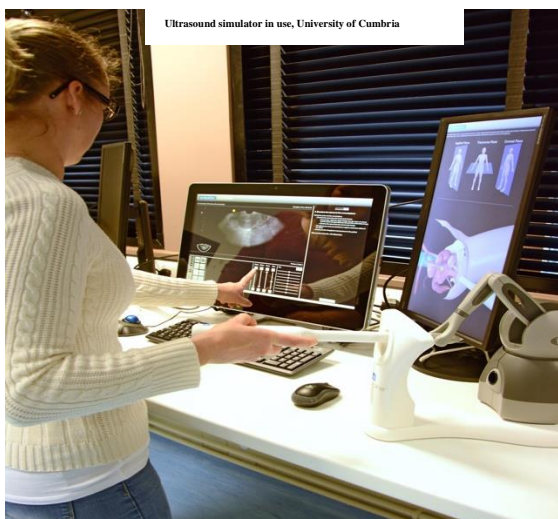


Funding was also provided to a variety of Trusts to provide local education and training facilities that will provide a local environment for private study and on-site imaging education. Several of these are now in operation across the North West region.

Although Ultrasound examinations form about a quarter of all diagnostic medical imaging procedures, ultrasound education and training has encountered significant challenges in recruiting and retaining Sonographers over many decades. The Universities of Cumbria and Salford were successful in being awarded monies to develop a collaborative ultrasound academy. The aim of this is to develop primary training in ultrasound through expanding their direct entry programme, whilst maintaining opportunities for qualified radiographers to move into this modality. The Ultrasound Academy has been able to use the HEE investments to create Ultrasound Skills Hubs at each university. These are being used not only to grow the numbers of new sonographers being educated but also to allow CPD ultrasound training for a variety of professional groups.



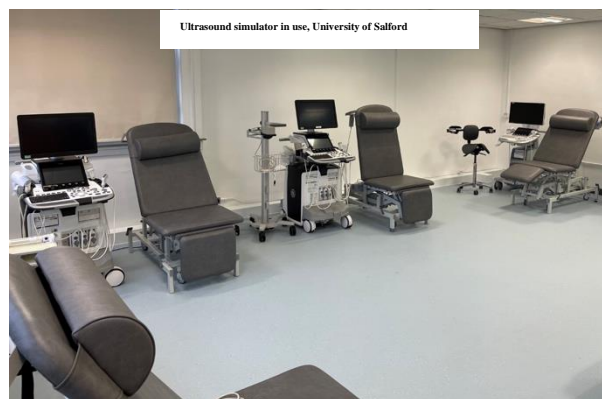
The academy consists of the hub simulation facilities at both universities but also dedicated spoke clinical training facilities within a variety NHS Trusts and a clinic run at Salford. Together these are able to provide a realistic clinical and simulated learning experiences which allow students to learn the complex psychomotor and patient care skills needed to educate sonographers in a safe environment free from many of the pressures of a busy clinical service.



The collaboration between the 2 universities will ensure resources available for ultrasound education are used both sustainably and effectively across the North West region.

“It has been refreshing and motivating to work together with partners to tackle this very difficult workforce issue. We have been delighted to see that some of the Trusts who have been working with us from the start of the project, now do not have any issues with recruiting sonographers and they are fully staffed. The time and efforts they have made to train and grow their own sonographer workforce are showing a significant payback for them.”

Charles Sloane (University of Cumbria) and Claire Mercer (University of Salford).



The University of Liverpool Department of Medical Imaging was awarded monies to develop MRI and CT courses for radiographers to enhance the workforce. They are due to run additional courses in 2022-23 offering a further 40 places (20 per modality). The modules have now been validated by the University as a Postgraduate Certificate in Cross-sectional Imaging and accreditation is now being sought from the College of Radiographers.



“The University of Liverpool is very pleased to have had the opportunity to work with the North West Imaging Academy and co-designed these two CT and MRI module to meet the current and future service needed. They are designed to provide education and training in CT and MRI to the radiographer new to either modality who needs to be able to get to the level where they can work as a valuable and competent member of the scanning team.”

Each module has been funded to run once a year and will provide places for 20 radiographers from Trusts in the North West. The semester long modules require only 3 days of face to face teaching with the rest of the learning is in the scanning department or online and can be managed around radiographers shift patters. Huge increases will be required in CT and MRI scans in the next 10 year as the new NHS plans are rolled out. These modules will enable more radiographers to be better trained in CT and MRI and so offer greater quality of service to the patients”.

Dr Stuart Mackay
Professional Lead for Diagnostic Radiography & Director of Studies MSc (pre-reg) Diagnostic Radiography Programme, University of Liverpool School of Health Sciences

Bolton NHS Foundation Trust are progressing well after being funded to undertake a scoping exercise to explore and present opportunities for the NWIA to support access to higher education for Imaging Support Workers, considering ways in which Level 2 or 3 occupation specific qualification(s), such as an apprenticeship could be accessed to increase take-up. The project will also consider how competency-based development and other role specific local training which can escalate progression into senior support worker roles and will undertake scoping nationally to identify available online learning to establish how that can support career progression as part of the escalator pathway.

The NWIA project is coordinated by the North West Imaging Academy Training Hub (NWIATH), which is based at Edge Hill University Medical School.



The NWIATH works closely with HEE and delivery providers to promote the functions and activities of the wider NWIA to maximise uptake of education and training opportunities and effective use of the resources funded, to quality assure the education and training

provided and oversee the quality management of the NWIA. The Hub reports to the NWIA Governance Board at which monthly reports on progress and return on investment are considered. The Hub is also leading on the development of a learning needs assessment tool (LNAT), that will be used to inform the strategic priorities for education and training required to inform future needs. The initial phase of this is now complete and work is commencing with the workforce leads to further develop this LNAT.

“Edge Hill University Medical School is proud to host both the North West Imaging Academy Training Hub and the Radiology Academy. The establishment of the NWIA provides a unique opportunity to enhance the multi-professional imaging workforce in the North West. The excellent state of the art facilities will allow us to offer many high-quality courses linked to workforce needs with options to study in a geographically convenient location”.

Julie-Michelle Bridson

Director of North West Imaging Academy Training Hub @ EHUMS & Head Postgraduate Medical Education.

And finally,

“I’d like to pass my sincere thanks to the clinicians, educators and experts who have led and supported this important development in the NW. A special thanks goes to my HEE team who have expertly convened partners and providers into an exemplar of a collaboration. I look forward to hearing about the Academy’s successes.”

**Christopher Cutts, Regional Director,
HEE in the North West**

Save the date:

Saturday 26th November 2022

FIRST NORTH WEST IMAGING ACADEMY
CONFERENCE

Venue: Edge Hill University Medical School,
Ormskirk

This event will be free and is aimed at ALL
IMAGING STAFF

Further details and registration will be issues
in September