



Australian Government
Australian Radiation Protection
and Nuclear Safety Agency

2016 Vol. 1

National Diagnostic Reference Level Service (NDRLS) Newsletter

Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of ARPANSA's NDRL Newsletter for 2016. This edition includes information about an update to the MDCT NDRL website.

Update of the NDRLS MDCT website

On the morning of Monday 3 October, the NDRL MDCT website will be undergoing maintenance for approximately 2 hours. During this time, users will not be able to access the website or enter data.

When the site returns, users will be given the ability to share data with colleagues at different facilities within the same business network. For those users who currently have multiple usernames, the update will allow you to use a single account to access all of your facilities. You will be able to view reports, update staff details, change passwords and enter data at all of your sites. We hope that this will make managing multiple imaging facilities easier.

Guidance on setting up access to multiple facilities is provided in the latest version of the NDRL user manual, available at the following address:

http://www.arpansa.gov.au/pubs/Services/NDRL/UserManual_2016.pdf

If you have any issues using the new features, please contact the NDRLD team via email (ndrld@arpansa.gov.au) or call the free hotline on 1800 033 972.

Planned Exposure Code

On the 16 September 2016, ARPANSA released a draft of the "Code for Radiation Protection in Planned Exposure Situations" for public comment and review. While the code does not address exposure to people undergoing medical procedures, it does cover occupational and public exposures and is therefore relevant to all radiation users. Copies of the draft can be downloaded from the ARPANSA website:

http://www.arpansa.gov.au/Publications/Drafts/dr_plannedexp.cfm

A corresponding draft addressing medical exposure has been produced and comment has been sought from state and territory regulators as well as some professional bodies, however it has not yet been released for public comment.



Record Number of Surveys Submitted

In our previous newsletter we reminded users that the wording of the Diagnostic Imaging Accreditation Scheme (DIAS) was being altered to explicitly state that imaging providers seeking Medicare rebates must provide proof of an annual comparison with the national DRLs.

Perhaps as a result of the changes to DIAS, the NDRL MDCT website has seen a record number of surveys submitted this year, with 675 surveys completed thus far. This is 275 more surveys than at the same time last year.

By the end of 2015, over 1000 surveys had been submitted to the NDRL service, a benchmark we are keen to surpass again this year. We would like to thank everyone who has participated so far this year, especially the 56 facilities who have registered for the first time.



Modality Updates...

Multi-Detector Computed Tomography (MDCT)

ARPANSA is currently in the process of forming a liaison panel to review the DRLs for CT. It is expected that the review will recommend an update of the DRLs based on the 2016 data. It is therefore extra important that the 2016 data truly reflects common practice within Australia – get your surveys in now at <https://ndrld.arpansa.gov.au/>

Nuclear Medicine

The nuclear medicine liaison panel has finished its work and signed off on draft DRLs for general nuclear medicine, PET and the CT portion of SPECT/CT and PET/CT. The state regulators, the Department of Health and relevant professional organisations will now be sent the DRLs for ratification. Once the DRLs have been adopted, ARPANSA will send all facilities that participated in the nuclear medicine survey last year a report comparing the doses they administered to the new DRLs, which can then be used for proof of compliance with the RPS 14, Section 3.1.8 requirements.

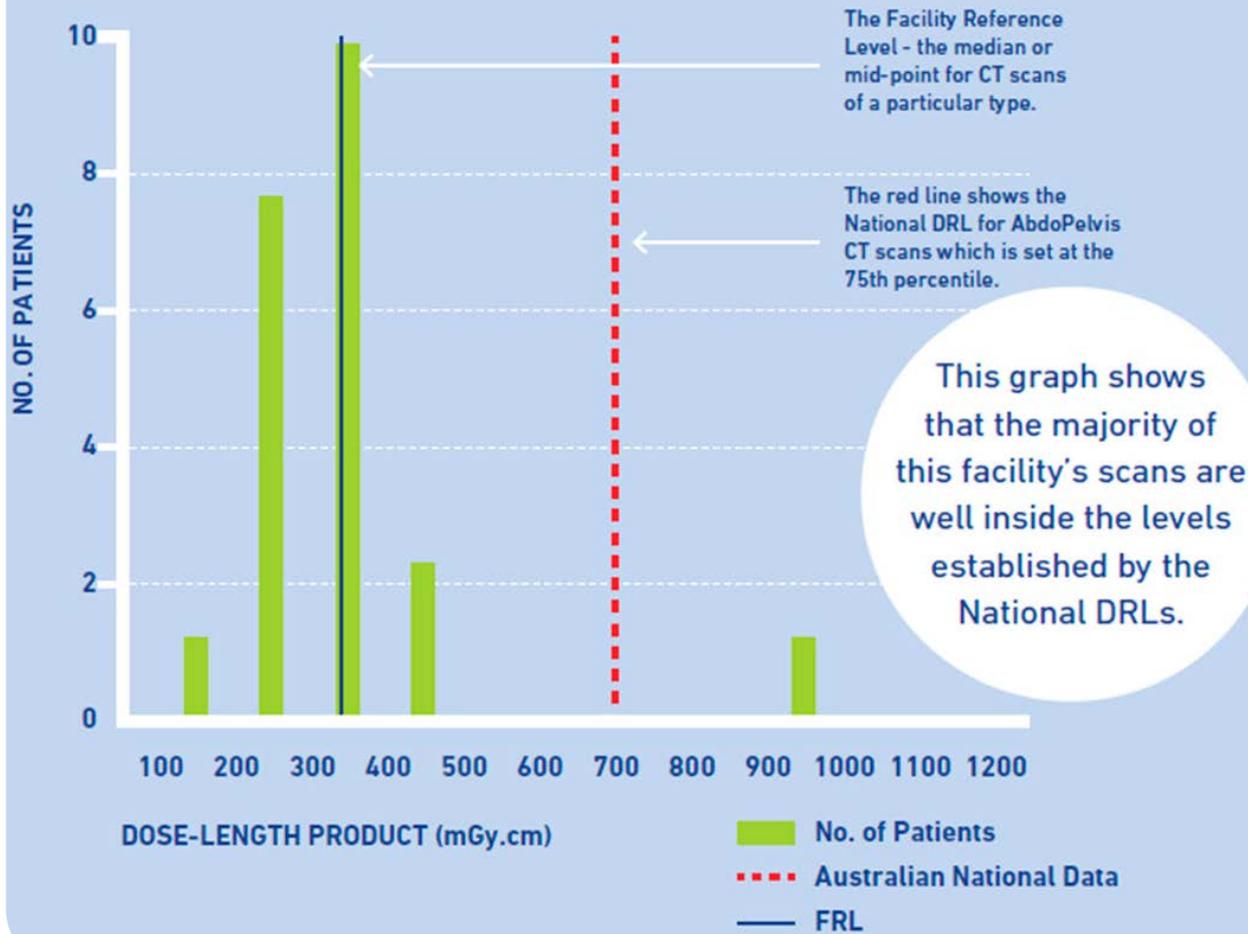
Mammography

A working group has been formed by the Australasian College of Physical Scientists and Engineers in Medicine (ACPSEM) to develop quality control (QC) procedures for tomosynthesis. ARPANSA has been in contact with the group to advise on alterations to the QC program that could facilitate the easy collection of dose information for DRL comparisons.

Image Guided Interventional Procedures (IGIP)

In 2014 ARPANSA launched the IGIP survey, which was originally scheduled to run until the end of December 2015. The survey helped to highlight some of the issues associated with classifying interventional procedures, such as the widely varying complexity of procedures and consequently the time required to perform IGIPs. We are continuing to accept data on image-guided interventional procedures using the spreadsheets circulated in 2014/2015. We would also welcome suggestions for procedures to be included in future surveys.

DRLs - Facility Reference Level Comparisons



UK DRL Update

Since the last newsletter was circulated, the United Kingdom has published updates to their national DRLs.

If you would like to compare your facility to your British counterparts, you can view the CT, general radiography, fluoroscopy and nuclear medicine DRLs on the UK government [website](#).

Referral Guidelines – App Available

Using referral guidelines is another way of assuring the appropriate use of ionising radiation and medical imaging.

An app based on Diagnostic Imaging Pathways (DIP) and optimised for iPhone 5, iPhone 6, and iPhone 6 Plus, and also for Android 4.3 and higher, is now freely available. Once downloaded it is fully operational without the need for an internet connection. Access to the internet is required for periodic updates. An intuitive menu structure allows navigation to the suite of pathways, which cover all of the major organ systems and many clinical conditions.

Further information about the app is available from <http://dipapp.info/>

(Please note: this is a product of WA Health, not ARPANSA)



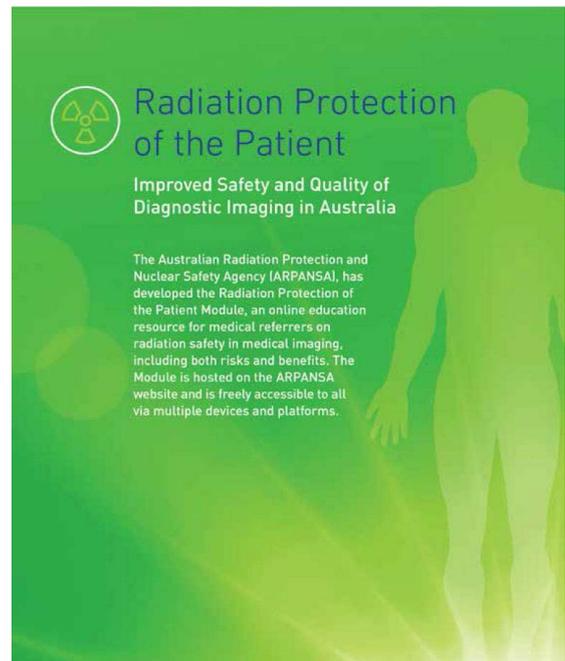
Educational Material...

Radiation Protection of the Patient (RPOP)

ARPANSA's online [Radiation Protection of the Patient](#) Training Module for improving safety awareness in medical imaging has continued to be used by doctors and other medical practitioners across the country.

The module provides assistance to referrers, particularly those that do not always have ready access to radiologists and medical physicists, such as physicians in rural and remote practices, general practitioners and other allied medical practitioners.

Many medical facilities have found that the accompanying [patient handout](#) is particularly useful for patients, as it explains the common imaging procedures as well as giving comparisons of the radiation dose from each.



Radiation Protection of the Medical Practitioner (RPOMP)

Occupational radiation protection training is needed for all staff working in medical facilities where ionising radiation is used. ARPANSA is working with a number of peak bodies, governmental and educational organisations and specialists to create Radiation Protection of the Medical Practitioner (RPOMP) educational material for inducting staff into these facilities and for ongoing training of existing staff.

There is some excellent training material 'out there'; however the quality and availability varies considerably. Some of the large teaching hospitals with dedicated medical physicists and fully trained Workplace Health and Safety staff have professional and sophisticated resources, while some smaller facilities have minimal and/or outdated information.

The ARPANSA RPOMP modules will be tailorable by location, occupation and level of involvement with ionising radiation, making them more consistent, up to date and relevant to staff than existing training materials. The tailored, modular approach acknowledges that the information required for professional medical staff with ongoing regular radiation contact, e.g. physicians and nurses in nuclear medicine rooms, will have different needs to those who may have minimal or incidental contact with ionising radiation, e.g. cleaners or administrators.

If you have any queries, suggestions or know of people with particular interest and expertise that ARPANSA could talk to, please contact Alan Mason on 03 9433 2429 or alan.mason@arpansa.gov.au

Contact info

Have a query? Email us at: ndrld@arpansa.gov.au

or ring on: **1800 033 972**