



**SoR** 100  
YEARS  
THE SOCIETY OF RADIOGRAPHERS

# Radiography Manifesto

Scotland



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# Contents

**Introduction** page 3

---

**Five headline demands** page 4

---

**1. Pay restoration to 2008 levels** page 6

---

**2. Workforce planning now and for the future** page 8

---

**3. Effective training and development routes for all** page 10

---

**4. Safe working practices and staffing** page 12

---

**5. A consensus on funding** page 14

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# Introduction



**David Pilborough**

*President, Society and College of Radiographers (SoR | CoR), 2023-2024*



**Thomas Welton**

*SoR | CoR President Elect*



**Katie Thompson**

*SoR | CoR Vice-President*

The Society of Radiographers' manifesto for a world-class health and social care system has been developed in consultation with our members across the four devolved nations.

This manifesto offers practical, realistic and positive solutions to the workforce crisis in our NHS – a crisis so acutely visible through the lens of radiography. It outlines the critical interventions – some of which are overdue and essential now, others which require longer-term implementation and commitment – necessary to help stabilise and then rebuild our NHS.

Many MSPs and decision makers do not realise the central role radiographers play in repairing the NHS. We hope to increase their understanding of radiography – and of the workforce crisis facing radiography departments across the country.

But we also want to offer solutions, before and after a general election, to help MSPs and decision makers to make better political choices. We want to work in partnership with them, in order to improve the NHS and its outcomes for patients and communities.

Representing more than 33,000 members, the Society of Radiographers is the professional body and trade union for all those working in medical imaging and radiotherapy.

Nine out of 10 patients in the NHS are supported by a radiography professional – who carry out X-rays, ultrasound, MRI and CT scans, as well as working in radiotherapy services as therapeutic radiographers, and in nuclear medicine.

Our members work in the NHS across all four nations, at all grades. This copy of the manifesto covers the specific needs of the radiography workforce in Scotland. The common thread across all versions, is the need to secure enough staff with the right skill mix to meet the continuing rising demand for imaging and radiotherapy treatment. Meeting this demand will require a range of strategic policies and resources – as outlined in the manifesto.

Radiographers are central to addressing the ever-growing NHS waiting lists. More than 1 million people are waiting for scans. Over 20% are waiting more than 6 weeks, with over 70,000 waiting over 13 weeks. Early diagnosis and early treatment saves lives, time and money for the taxpayer. It's what we would all want for our family and friends.

The failure to invest sufficiently in increasing the radiography workforce capacity over the last two decades is the biggest reason why the UK's waiting lists are significantly longer than in countries such as Germany and France – and our health outcomes are worse than in most other leading economies. Our country needs our political leaders to make different and better political choices.

**Our members deserve better.  
Our patients deserve better.**



## “ Five headline demands

The Society of Radiographers (SoR) is the trade union and professional body for the radiography workforce. Established in 1920, we stand as one of the oldest and most experienced radiography organisations in the world. Representing over 90% of the UK's diagnostic and therapeutic radiography workforce, we advocate for the educational, professional and workplace interests of our members, as well as shaping the healthcare agenda for the radiography profession.

Our profession is crucial to healthcare, with 9 out of 10 patients who attend hospital being cared for by a member of the radiographic workforce.

To increase the diagnostic and therapeutic radiography workforce to meet the increasing demand on the NHS, we want action now to start

restoring the pay to appropriate levels. This must be coupled with a workforce plan that delivers the number of radiographers and associated professionals needed now and in the future.

To do this requires effective planning, delivery, and investment in the different pathways that people can choose to enter, develop and progress within the profession. All this must be aligned with steps to guarantee safe working practices in the interests of both staff and patients.

To make this sustainable, we want to see a political consensus on the level of funding and desired outcomes required for a world-class health and social care system in the UK.



## Our manifesto covers five key demands:

**1.**

Committing to inflation-proof pay awards and pay restoration to 2008 levels.

**2.**

Ensure increasing demand can be met now and into the future, with strategic diagnostic and therapeutic radiography workforce planning.

**3.**

Enable people to enter, develop and progress within the radiography profession safely, from entry level support workers to advanced and consultant radiographer practitioners.

**4.**

Ensure safe working practices, adequate staffing numbers and skill mix to maintain a safe service for patients and staff in all areas of radiography.

**5.**

Adequate funding for a world class health and social care system throughout the UK

# 1. Pay restoration to 2008 levels.

Committing to inflation-proof pay awards and pay restoration to 2008 levels.

*“We are witnessing patients deteriorating on ever-increasing waiting lists, because we don’t have enough radiographers even though I’m working excessive hours because we have so many vacancies. I see colleagues leaving the NHS, searching for better work and better pay, and I’m tempted to join them.”*



- Fully address the inadequate pay and reward for NHS staff. This is at the heart of the current workforce crisis. This starts by committing to restore the pay of the radiography workforce in the NHS to 2008 levels, relative to total average pay.
- Guarantee future annual pay rises at least 1% above inflation for all NHS staff. This would signpost that NHS staff are valued and recognised, assisting recruitment and retention. Inflation-proofing future pay awards also reduces political risks and helps long-term NHS cost planning.
- Improve the starting rate of pay to make it more competitive – radiographers have among the lowest starting pay of any graduate professionals.
- Guarantee that promotion pays. Pay gaps between bands have been eroded. This discourages applications for promotion and ultimately undermines retention and reward.
- Ensure no one loses money to train or take on professional development.

## 2. Workforce planning now and for the future.

Ensure increasing demand can be met now and into the future, with strategic diagnostic and therapeutic radiography workforce planning.






- Deliver robust workforce planning at Board and National level ensuring that plans are developed in partnership
- Support transparent tracking and auditing of workforce numbers, measured against agreed forecast demand.
- Procure and maintain the equipment required for a world class health system.
- Ensure effective planning to enable more flexible working to retain the radiography workforce.
- Address barriers at a UK level to the recruitment and retention of international radiography professionals into the Scottish NHS workforce.
- Ensure that all new technologies, including AI, are accompanied by good governance processes with clear accountability.

## 3. Effective training and development routes for all.

Enable people to enter, develop and progress within the profession safely, from entry level support workers to enhanced and consultant radiographer practitioners.



*“I originally started my career as a psychologist, specializing in mental health research. When I learned about Functional MRI machines, I decided to retrain as a radiographer to incorporate this technology into my research. I’m enjoying the course and look forward to integrating empathetic patient care into my future practice.”*

**Nima Norbu Sherpa**  
**Diagnostic Radiography (Pre-Registration)**  
**MSc Student, Glasgow Caledonian**  
**University (GCU)**

- Build additional capacity to support student and degree-level apprentice development whilst protecting time for on-going professional development at all levels through to advanced and consultant practice.
- Commit to the introduction of an apprenticeship pathway as an additional entry route into the Radiography profession
- Increase capacity for practice-based education within the NHS to offer alternative routes to entering and developing within the profession.
- Support retention with a high standard of induction for all.
- Ensure high-quality, profession-specific preceptorships with mandatory national standards.
- Provide support and funding for radiographers to take senior professional leadership roles in all areas of clinical imaging and therapeutic radiography.
- Support academics, educators, and researchers to support the growth and the long-term future of the profession through growing the evidence base around professional practice.

## 4. Safe working practices and staffing.

Ensure safe working practices, adequate staffing numbers and skill mix to maintain a safe service for patients and staff in all areas of radiography.





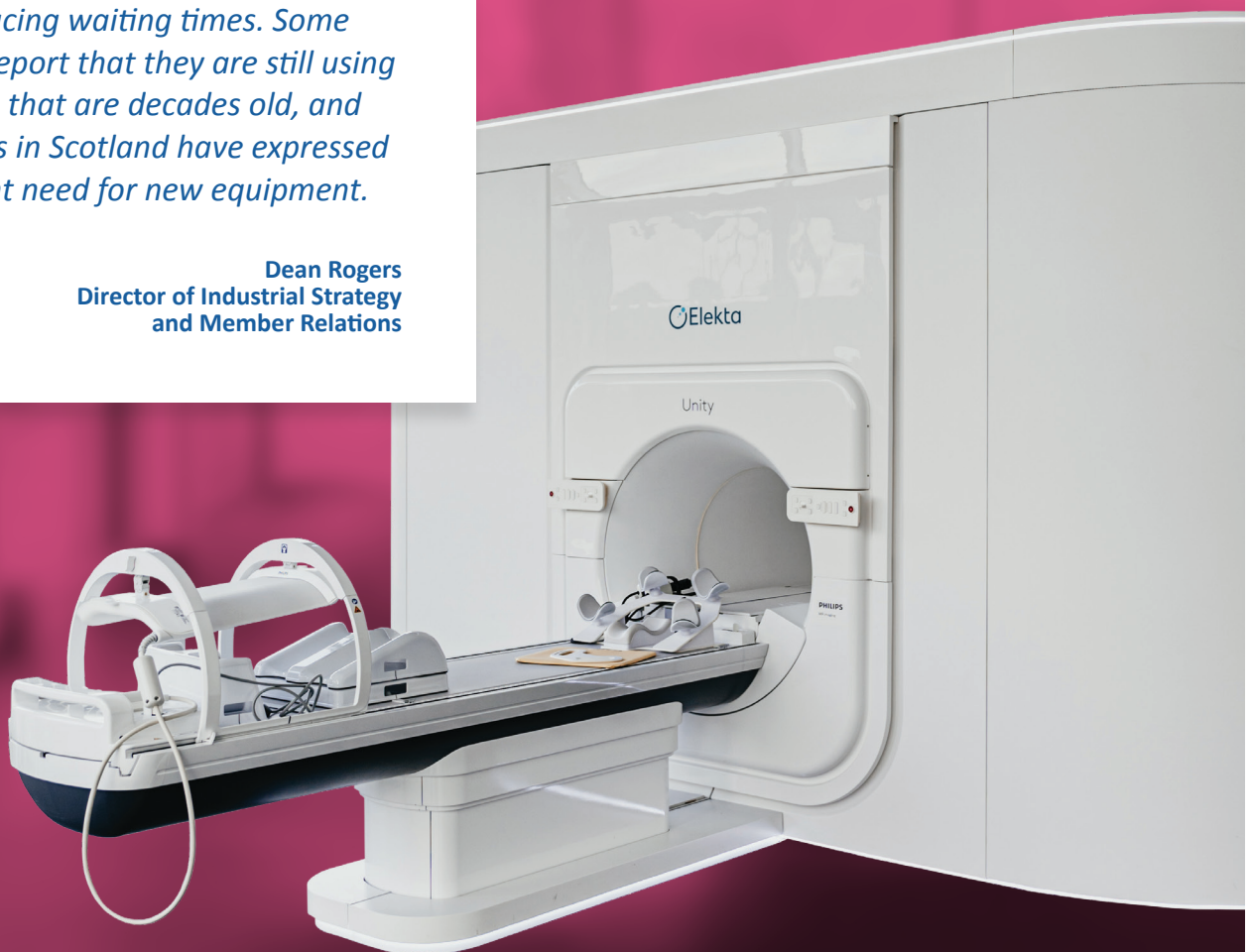
- Ensure the robust implementation of the Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019, delivering appropriate staffing in health and care services, thereby enabling safe and high quality care and improved outcomes for service users.
- Implement statutory registration of sonographers.
- Ensure staff are enabled and supported to report safety concerns with clear reporting and accountability around incident reporting.
- Increase support for international recruits to work and practice safely within the NHS.
- Review the support for the HCPC to carry out its responsibilities safely and fairly given the expanding and changing workforces.

## 5. A consensus on funding.

Adequate funding for a world-class health and social care system throughout the UK.

*“The SoR is pleased with the increased investment in new technology, as it is essential for improving patient care and reducing waiting times. Some Boards report that they are still using scanners that are decades old, and members in Scotland have expressed an urgent need for new equipment.”*

**Dean Rogers**  
Director of Industrial Strategy  
and Member Relations



- Commit to matching EU15 average spending per person on health and social care.
- Seek a political consensus on how much will be invested and how it will be shared across NHS Scotland.
- Reinforce the 'not-for-profit' delivery principle

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