

Working in a Therapy Department

Radiographers deliver doses of X-rays and other ionising radiation to patients, most of whom are suffering from various forms of cancer. The aim of the treatment is to deliver an accurate dose of radiation to the tumour/cancer whilst minimising the dose received by the surrounding tissues.

Radiotherapy radiographers are involved in the care of the cancer patient from the initial referral clinic stage, where pre-treatment information is given, through the planning process, treatment and eventually post-treatment review (follow-up) stages.



Work Activities

Radiographers have regular contact with patients over the course of their treatment. They deal with patients of all ages and have an important role in helping patients to cope with the daily physical and psychological demands of having radiotherapy.

Typical work activities are likely to include the following:

- planning a course of treatment with clinical oncologists and physicists
- calculating the radiation dosage and mapping the area to be treated, while minimising the dose given to normal tissue
- developing a relationship with the patient and the patient's family
- explaining the treatment, the processes used and any possible side effects
- administering radiation treatment accurately and safely
- observing and assessing patients' responses to treatment, often on a daily basis

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Radiography



What is Radiography?



Radiography goes far beyond X-rays and it has various branches with the two main ones being **diagnostic imaging** and **radiotherapy**.

Diagnostic imaging encompasses a wide range of modalities, such as, ultrasound, magnetic resonance imaging, nuclear medicine and of course, X-rays.

Radiotherapy also known as radiation treatment is the controlled use of high energy X-rays to treat many different types of cancer.

Working in Medical Imaging

Radiographers in the imaging department of the hospital work in a number of sections encompassing a wide range of different imaging modalities such as ultrasound, magnetic resonance imaging, nuclear medicine, computerised tomography and PET scanning and X-rays. Radiographers are able to undertake most investigations, but may wish to specialise at a stage in one particular area.

Radiographers working in an imaging department provide a service for most departments within the hospital including accident and emergency, outpatients, operating theatres and wards.



Work Activities

Tasks typically involve:

- assessing patients and their clinical requirements to determine appropriate radiographic techniques
- performing a range of radiographic examinations on patients to produce high-quality images
- observing and maintaining contact with patients during their waiting, examination and post-examination stay in the department
- Providing support and reassurance to patients, taking into account their physical and psychological needs

