

## **Introduction**

If more students and trainees knew about Interventional Radiology (IR), it would outrank surgery in popularity. IR utilises cutting-edge technology in minimally invasive procedures (pinhole surgeries). IR has improved patient outcomes by reducing risk and hospital stays. However, it is important to promote IR, because as a Radiology subspecialty, it is affected by misconceptions such as long working hours and excessive radiation exposure .

## **Social Media**

The modern era has seen the harnessing of social media to spread knowledge. Organisations can promote IR to trainees and students on social networks, such as Facebook. However, promotion must be innovative and engaging to stand out against other organisations promoting their specialty, e.g. RCS.

Recommendations include:

1. Social media posts of questions/case studies, with answers posted in the comments. This helps students/trainees revise whilst exposing them to topics within IR. Posts could also be short bites of information about IR as a speciality.
2. Short videos and/or a podcast series on topics like “Why choose IR?” or “From trainee to consultant: An Interview Series”. These interactive media outlets are easily accessible to busy trainees and are gentle introductions to the world of IR.
3. Promoting free/paid IR events. Algorithms on facebook allow users to see what events their friends are interested/attending. In some cases, herd mentality can greatly increase attendance especially when linked to an examination or deadline.
4. Having areas on relevant organisations’ websites dedicated to students/trainees where key information on IR and opportunities are hosted for free.

## **Student Engagement**

In the modern era, conventional promotion like newsletters and booths at career fairs remain effective. For example, the RSM’s annual medical specialities fair is popular amongst medical students. Organisations like the BSIR should also consider being present at student led fairs and initiatives. There are 19 Radiology societies registered with the RCR out of 33 medical schools in the UK. With such few societies, the RCR and BSIR should support them and help promote IR to their members.

As a medical student with an interest in IR, I found there are few opportunities to be exposed to IR, in particular those provided by organisations such as the RCR. I would recommend:

1. A Summer School Course in IR, including hands on workshops. Undergraduate days are useful, however one can only scratch the surface of radiology in a day.
2. Implementing a “Buddy” scheme, where a student is paired up with an IR trainee. By shadowing their mentor, students can gain valuable insight into IR.
3. A 2 year Fellowship programme for final year medical students. This would encourage participation in IR research, and help them maintain their interest in IR during training.
4. A national IR student committee to coordinate events and promotion of IR.

In conclusion, IR is a varied fascinating speciality with no shortage of appeal. Various strategies must be employed to promote IR to students/trainees by combined efforts of relevant societies, so that the beauty of IR can be discovered and admired by all, regardless of their eventual speciality.