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REIMAGINING INDIAN HEALTHCARE

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CHANGING DYNAMICS OF **RADIOLOGY** **BUSINESS**

Innovative business models will lead growth in the new decade



APPROACH
UNDERSTANDING
NEW USER

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ORTHOPAEDICS

OPINION
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INTERVIEW
LIVING LEGEND,
HANS RINGERTZ

In Conversation with Dr Arjun Kalyanpur on Making Radiology Practice More Effective



Dr Arjun Kalyanpur

FASTER AND accurate, are the words that have defined and anchored innovations in radiology for the past decade. There has been a major movement for quicker scans and accurate diagnostics to save patient lives throughout 2000s. As a consequence, the number of cases radiologists go through have increased dramatically. This raised issues related to burnout and safety. To remain accurate with speed without getting burnout and provide safe diagnostics is the current challenge radiologists' face. Efficiency and safety will be the definitive pillars of innovation for the coming decade. The focus now is not only on delivering faster diagnostics but better outcomes throughout care continuum. To find out more about making radiology practice more effective, we spoke to noted radiologist Dr Arjun Kalyanpur, Co-Founder, Teleradiology Solutions. He talks about the appropriateness of radiology testing and correct diagnosis having a positive impact on treatment decisions and ultimately making patients healthier.

Looking at the current practice in India and South East Asia do you think we are focusing enough on effectiveness?

I feel that the healthcare situation in India is currently overwhelmed by physician shortages (radiology is at the forefront of this crisis). With

the increasing corporatisation of healthcare comes the realisation that effectiveness needs to be made a focus but this is still nascent to some extent. Although technologies that greatly enhance the effectiveness of healthcare delivery such as telemedicine (with teleradiology being a subspecialty application thereof) have now been available for at least two decades, they are still significantly underutilised which to my mind is an indication that this focus is lacking.

How do we make changes to bring more effectiveness into radiology practice?

The primary change needed is a mindset change on the part of the stakeholders in the form of awareness of what effectiveness means in healthcare. Its key components include appropriate utilization, evidence based medicine and value based medical practice, with the fourth pillar being efficiency. Training of medical personnel beginning at the medical school level is necessary to understand what diagnostic study is appropriate in what clinical scenario. The development of diagnostic algorithms and pathways by specialist societies (for example by the Society of Emergency Radiology, of which I have the privilege of being a founder member), are key to ensuring appropriate diagnostic triage. The use of evidence based medicine is a key initiative in

improving the quality of healthcare delivered and ensuring standards of practice are maintained in healthcare, and involves periodic review and incorporation of the latest scientific developments into medical practice, ie close collaboration between research institutions and healthcare institutions. The focus on value based medicine is irrevocably linked with that of efficiency. In teleradiology, for example, the use of creative scheduling solutions, workflow technologies and Artificial Intelligence/Deep Learning algorithms allows for optimal utilisation of radiologist time which is a highly precious resource today, and allows for the value thus created to be passed on to the healthcare system in the form of improved quality with more rapid and efficient service delivery.

Can we measure this effectiveness?

We can and certainly should. Tracking parameters and metrics need to be utilised to track effectiveness of healthcare practice

that may be tailored to the specific service being delivered. In the teleradiology space the parameters that are tracked (by our organization for example) are report turnaround time (TAT) and Report Quality metrics. A good example is the peer review scoring system developed by the American College of Radiology. In similar manner, each specialty and service can develop or incorporate and utilise parameters that are relevant to them.

What should we strive for in the future?

A nation/world in which healthcare delivery is gauged not merely by the quality of an individual physician, or by the best outcome delivered and anecdotally communicated but on consistency of performance as determined by objective quantification and tracking of performance metrics and rigorously documented and shared in an atmosphere of transparency, with the quality patient care as its primary focus. **IMT**

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