

MDCT/CTA essentials course

Leon Janse van Rensburg
(RSSA Congress Chairman)

I take great pleasure in announcing and welcoming you to another 'first' in the RSSA CME programme: the first RSSA Essentials in MDCT/CTA course, presented by an international faculty of four highly distinguished and acclaimed radiologists. The course is co-ordinated by Professor Elliot Fishman of John Hopkins University School of Medicine, Baltimore, USA.

Owing to rapid advances in technology, radiologists and radiographers often require comprehensive review of recent advances in computed body tomography. The course will focus on 64-slice multi-detector computed tomography (MDCT) and newer systems including dual-source CT scanners. The programme consists of a series of 40-minute lectures that will concentrate on specific topics in depth, including state-of-the-art technology and software. Participants will have the opportunity to expand their knowledge of the latest concepts and principles of spiral/helical CT, thoracic CT, cardiac CT and computed tomography angiography (CTA), the uses of CT in the GI tract, including the liver, spleen and kidneys, as well as virtual colonoscopy and imaging the oncologic patient.

The course runs from 26 - 28 August 2011 at the Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg; details are on the conference website <http://www.rssa2011CTcourse.co.za>.

The scientific paper session for the 2011 RSSA Travel Award of R40 000 will take place at the same time, and there will also be a poster exhibition with substantial prizes. I take this opportunity to thank the Scientific Committee (Professors Victor Mngomezulu (Chairperson) and Zarina Lockhat, and Dr Christelle Ackermann).

The RSSA gratefully acknowledges the support of all our sponsors. Without educational grants, events like these cannot be hosted, and their commitment to radiology, training and teaching is appreciated and indispensable. Thank you very much.

I extend a special word of gratitude and a warm South African welcome to the faculty members: Professors Elliot Fishman, Jill Jacobs, Karen Horten and David P Naidich. I believe that this event will be mutually beneficial.

ESOR musculoskeletal visiting scholarship report

Hanief Moosa

(Dr Moosa was awarded the first European School of Radiology (ESOR) visiting MSK scholarship for South Africa, and spent 3 months at the University Hospital of Strasbourg from 15 September - 15 December 2010.)

Working in a state-of-the-art centre of excellence has certainly been among the best 3 months of my life and has helped me to grow professionally and personally.

As I had only read about, and not performed, any of the MSK interventional procedures prior to my stay in Strasbourg, Professor Afshin Gangi and his team went out of their way to teach me all that they could, theoretically and practically, up to the point where I am confident of performing the procedures independently. The department is a dedicated non-vascular interventional radiology suite with an open-bore MRI, 128-slice CT and fluoroscopy units. Eighty per cent of the cases were MSK (predominantly spinal intervention); the balance

comprised body oncology management (RF and cryoablation) and drainages. The department was very busy, with full lists booked every day from 8 a.m. - 8 p.m., Monday to Friday. In general, about 6 long cases were booked in the morning and about 10 - 12 short cases for the afternoon. A large number of diagnostic scans relating to the procedures to be done were also done in the afternoon/evening each day.

The long cases involved mainly vertebroplasty, radiofrequency ablation and cryoablation of various tumours (hepatic, renal, pulmonary, prostatic, paravertebral), laser ablation of osteoid osteomas, and pulmonary, bone and intervertebral disc biopsies. The shorter cases involved epidural and foraminal steroid infiltrations, facet joint steroid infiltrations, discography, nucleotomy, gastrostomies and drainages.

As the bulk of the work was interventional and a small component diagnostic and predominantly spine imaging, Professor Gangi arranged in the second month for me to spend 2 days a week at the sister hospital in Hautpierre, under the tutelage of Dr Jean-Claude Dosch, an esteemed MSK radiologist with over 30 years' experience in the field.

From 8 - 9 a.m. we reviewed and reported on all the plain radiographs from the trauma unit's calls the night before. The rest of the morning to midday was spent performing and interpreting CT arthrograms of various joints, with the afternoons spent in the MRI unit interpreting about 17 cases of a variety of MSK pathologies. Furthermore, I was introduced to the basics of MSK ultrasound.

I was also fortunate to attend the ESOR Advanced GALEN MSK Cross-sectional Imaging Course in Madrid, which was most beneficial. The lecturers and their workshops were engaging, informative and of a very high standard. I moreover met radiologists and residents from the rest of Europe; networking and learning how things are done in various countries around the world made the course even more enjoyable.

Professor Gangi's ability to enjoyably motivate staff and patients, while providing healthcare par excellence and innovating and designing new techniques and equipment for improved patient care, has been truly inspiring and has taught me much about leadership in the radiology workplace as well. I am deeply indebted and most grateful to him and his team, notably Dr Xavier Buy and Dr Julien Garnon (Senior Consultant and Fellow respectively), for their guidance and tutelage; their patience and desire to teach is commendable.

I'm extremely grateful to Dr Jean-Claude Dosch for his passionate interest and striving to pass on his vast experience and knowledge, despite him not being the most fluent in English. I also take this opportunity to thank my head of department, Professor Victor Mngomezulu, and the Department of Diagnostic Radiology at the University of the Witwatersrand, and notably my fellow registrars, for their support and sacrifice during my time away. It has been an honour for me to represent the university in this regard. Special thanks to the Radiological Society of South Africa too, for their encouragement and facilitating this opportunity through their association with ESOR. The everlasting friendships made along the way, the chance to learn some French and the intercultural experience has been most memorable.

Musculoskeletal radiology is a massive field; while I have grown tremendously, both diagnostically and interventional, I still have much to learn. The visiting scholarship has achieved its objective and has sparked a strong personal desire to sub-specialise in this field. I thank ESOR and Bracco Imaging S.p.A. for affording me this opportunity to fulfil a dream. I look forward to sharing and implementing my newly-learned skills for the benefit of the South African population.