



Radiology Registrar launches ultrasound service at Malawi Clinic

A radiology registrar has introduced a new ultrasound service at a rural clinic in Malawi. Amit Parekh, from the Severn radiology training scheme, is spending six months at the Billy Riordan Clinic at Cape Malcear. The Clinic mainly offers outpatient services, with limited inpatient services and a basic laboratory, serving a population of 20,000 people around the shores of Lake Malawi. Recently, the Clinic was able to acquire a second hand ultrasound machine with Amit leading a project introducing its use to the Clinic.

The first step was to set up and calibrate the scanner, an Aloka SSO-650 CL, dating from the 1980s. Amit then approached the medical director with a proposal to start a new diagnostic ultrasound service for the Clinic, outlining indications and a referral pathway for ultrasound scans. The service has been up and running now for over four months and has been very successful. Over one hundred scans have been performed on patients with a wide range of conditions, from tuberculosis to pyomyositis.

In order to ensure that a basic ultrasound service continues when he leaves, Amit has delivered tutorials on practical ultrasound techniques to current doctors at the Clinic. He also developed a comprehensive ultrasound manual to accompany the tutorials which has been distributed to all medical staff.

Setting up the new service has been a challenge, particularly as the Clinic has functioned without any diagnostic imaging services for the last ten years. However, now that the service is up and running, it is widely appreciated both by the clinical staff and the patients, some of whom travel significant distances to access ultrasound services at the Clinic.

