



# Learning for Professional Practice

## Current Issues: Patient perception of clinical photography

The aim of this paper is to bring to the attention papers or topics for consideration by medical illustrators in their professional practice, for review or discussion in a department or that may need raising at local or national levels.

This learning and CPD activity suggests three areas from recent literature to be examined:

- How do patients view clinical photography?
- Photography and social media.
- Display of historical clinical photographic collections

### Learning activity: Critical review

As an individual or in a group critically review and discuss the impact of one or more of the topics in this paper and areas covered in the references cited for review. If working as a team it may be worth looking at a paper each or one between two people. Then consider how photography is used or could be used and the impact this may have on your professional practice or the wider implications on policies and procedures you may have in place locally. Table 1 covers some broad areas and ideas for questions, though these may not be applicable to every topic.

Areas of practice	Questions
Service provision	What kind of a service could you provide to others to replace mobile phones or their own cameras? Are there any financial implications regarding the type of equipment you or others use clinically? What would the cost of a breach of ethics be?
Policies and procedures	What are the implications for your department? Do you think changes need to take place at a departmental, organizational, hospital or national level? If so what changes?
Staff support and CPD	Do you know how to find support for colleagues? Do you or could you provide them with guidance and support? Are you taking the lead in CPD for other staff in the area? How can you help staff understand the issues surrounding clinical photography and sharing?
Professional Practice	What is your current practice and does it need updating in the light of these papers?

Table 1 Questions that could be considered as part of your critical review of the papers

### How do patients view clinical photography?

Patients' views on photography have been considered in other papers in this journal including "Social interactions in photographing-even in medical illustration" by Beloff (1984), a previous current issues paper looking at consent for clinical photography (Bryson 2013). The relationship between photography and its effect on patients through its use by professional clinical photographers and others and how those photographs are used or shared continues to be an issue especially with the impact of the web pages, apps and social media and the availability of cameras in mobile phones.

In a study looking at patients' perception of medical photography conducted by Lau (2010) they found a low level of acceptance of personal cameras (16%) and phones (12%) compared to hospital equipment (75%). Further studies have followed this up for example in Nigeria (Adeyemo 2013) and views of dermatology patients in France by Hacard (2013) and New York, United States of America by Leger (2014).

### Photography and social media

Recent papers in this journal have covered the relationship between photography and social media including Payne's 2013 review of current clinical photography guidelines in relation to smartphone publication of medical images. Other papers have also looked at this topic including the editorial by Citrome (2015) and review article in the International Journal of Clinical Practice by Harting (2015). The extent of image sharing in social media was addressed by Crane (2016) in the paper "Pathology Image-Sharing on Social Media: Recommendations for Protecting Privacy While Motivating Education".

A recent paper by Palacios-González (2015) suggests that clinical photography should be viewed in tandem with social media and argues for and against the use of clinical photographs in social media with examples where it could be advantageous and allowed a place in the diffusion of knowledge, with suitable safeguards in place and the importance of informed consent.

This together with editorials and papers about how clinical staff manage their digital profiles is an issue that many medical journals are discussing as a quick search in scholar.google.co.uk can demonstrate e.g. using search terms "healthcare and social media".

### Display of historical clinical photographic collections

The recent paper by te Hennepe (2016) highlights the need to consider how we view and display even historical clinical photographs. This is captured very well in the paper's abstract

"Medical photography collections often remind us of the inescapable reality of human suffering and pain, and at the same time they oblige us to deal with questions of ownership and privacy. Medical photography collections are thus considered 'sensitive' collections within the museum context. This essay investigates privacy issues involved in the curating of historical photographic collections in museum spaces. When medical photography entered into non-medical domains privacy issues emerged. It is these privacy issues that cast a shadow of sensitivity on the medical material. But the relationship between clinical photograph collections and museums is not as straightforward as it may seem. Personal

pictures involve power and privacy, and both aspects play a role in the public display of historical medical photographs, often in unexpected ways."

Several other authors have started to address these issues including Megen de Bruin-Molé (2016) and Greenfieldboyce (2017) in a blog looking at medical ethicists views on the bones of the Irish Giant.

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