A new anniversary of the discovery of x-rays

A momentous event simultaneously revolutionized both physics and medicine on November 8, 1895 when Wilhelm Conrad Roentgen discovered x-rays while working in his laboratory at the University of Würzburg in Germany. The World Health Organization (WHO) wishes to congratulate all radiologists and radiographers upon the occasion of this year’s anniversary of the discovery of the x-Rays.

Within one year of Roentgen’s discovery, the application of x-rays to diagnosis and therapy was rapidly established as part of medical practice. Medical imaging was born with this discovery that transformed medicine. However, there still exist huge disparities in access to diagnostic imaging technologies between, and even within, countries worldwide.

Universal Health Coverage (UHC) is a priority goal for the WHO. UHC equates to all people having access to health services without suffering financial hardship. The three primary dimensions of UHC are population coverage, service coverage and cost coverage. UHC also encompasses safety, quality and effectiveness in health care, which includes access to medical imaging services.

The International Radiology Day (IDoR) and the World Radiography Day are annually celebrated on the 8th November (http://www.isradiology.org/isr/index.php and http://www.isrrt.org/isrrt/default.asp). Each year, this date is dedicated to celebrating the collective work accomplished by all radiologists and radiographers around the world and to raise awareness of the importance of medical imaging in healthcare. This celebration provides an opportunity to advocate for engaging health professionals in the promotion and implementation of radiation safety and quality in health care, thus contributing to health systems' strengthening and UHC.

The International Society of Radiology (ISR) and the International Society of Radiographers and Radiological Technologists (ISRRT) are NGOs formally “in official relations with the WHO”. Joint work plans are established based on mutual objectives with the ultimate common WHO goal of “attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health”. Together with the ISR and the ISRRT, professional societies worldwide will hold a range of different events to celebrate this day.
WHO welcomes this initiative and encourages radiologists and radiographers from all over the world to continually improve radiation safety and quality, to foster excellence in health care services.