

II. Setting standards for relocatable stereotactic head frames: Controversies

Stereotactic head frame systems have been commercially available for many years, and their use will increase as more patients receive conformal high precision radiotherapy of the head and neck. Some head frame products remain, and some, occasionally due to technical issues, have been discarded. As one considers standards of performance and safety for these systems, various topics arise such as assessments of design concept, patient comfort and safety, MRI-CT-Radiotherapy compatibility, positioning accuracy, daily quality assurance, and staffing. Some of the controversial issues are: the need for standards – are there clinical or anecdotal reports of current deficiencies; is MRI compatibility necessary or is software fusion good enough; couch supports; estimating and quoting re-positioning accuracy; treatment margin and the extent to which it may affect outcome; portal films: is the extra radiation dose and time worthwhile; and finally, should individual clinics be accredited for high precision fractionated stereotactic treatment? Audience discussion is encouraged.