

Hi there, my name is Stuart Calder

and I am an MRI applications specialist in Australia. I started my career over 30 years ago when I started studying diagnostic radiography in Edinburgh, Scotland. I graduated in 1991 and after almost four years of working in Edinburgh I went on an adventure to Australia, originally for a year – however 24 years later I'm still here! When I look back I think I was either crazy or brave to do such a thing. I don't think that I would have the nerve for such an adventure these days – having said that I haven't regretted my move. When you move country to work I think you make a real effort to be social and meet new people and as such it doesn't take long to create a group of friends and feel like home. Australia also didn't seem too foreign for a British person as the Queen is still on the money, they drive on the left side of the road, and they speak English.



Melbourne, Australia



How did you first come in contact with MRI?

Working as a radiographer in a private hospital in Melbourne gave me my first exposure to MR. Amazingly, when I left Scotland there were no clinical MRI machines – how times have changed. In 2000 I became an MRI Supervisor and in 2005 I became the MRI State Coordinator for the company I worked for. Over those years I worked on four different magnets across all vendors. I distinctly remember our double echo sequence for 19 transverse slices in the brain used to take 9:02 minutes and I also remember kneeling at the end of the scanner to manually tune the extremity coil before we could start scanning. The younger generation always laugh when I tell them such stories. In 2010 after 15 years of service at Epworth Hospital in Melbourne I felt I needed a change and hence started with Siemens.

What is most fascinating about your job?

I distinctly remember my first day with Siemens Australia. I was sent to Adelaide to shadow a colleague who was installing a MAGNETOM Trio. A staff member at this hospital asked how long I'd been with Siemens and I replied: „About 45 minutes“. She laughed and said, „Excellent! It's my first day, too“. Back then our MR applications team was very small, we had three applications specialists, a product specialist, and a marketing manager. Now, nine years later the success of the MR business in this region, its research possibilities, and the quality and support that Siemens offer speak for themselves. I find the main part of my role is to provide outstanding customer service. We get to ensure that the professionals we teach are well equipped and up-to-date on the use of their equipment. This ultimately filters down to the patient so they can have the best possible outcome with a high level of patient care.

Being an applications specialist has given me the opportunity to learn so much. Not only from the excellent courses we attend but also from a cross section of the radiographers we teach and the colleagues we get to work with. No two weeks are ever the same and most Mondays it feels like you're starting a new job with the fears of – what will the customers be like?; where should I park?; what are their expectations of me?; where's the toilet?; where's a good place for coffee?

What do you think are the most important developments in MRI and in healthcare?

MR is also far more accessible now than it was when I first started in MR. MRI used to only be available in major hospitals in major cities. People are living longer and with this aging population comes the need for more screening scans and therefore preventing diseases before they occur. Nowadays, even the smallest private practise often has an MR scanner and patients can now also have the convenience of not having to travel so far for an examination or wait so long for it. This of course has its own challenges as it gets more difficult to find experienced MRI radiographers to staff these scanners. Siemens have the ability now however to utilize Siemens Remote Service (SRS) and provide assistance in real time. This again has been implemented since I started with Siemens – the Applications helpdesk in the Australia / New Zealand region is a full-time job which is shared between all of us.

The speed of MR development astounds me too. Again when I started we were on either syngo MR A or B software and worked on MAGNETOM Espree, Avanto, Trio, and Verio systems. Then along came syngo MR C, D, E software, syngo.via, and now syngo MR XA platforms. There's never a dull moment and with each software release R&D come up with better solutions for customer ease of use and the

ability to scan more patients which ultimately leads to shorter waiting lists and a better outcome for the patient which is our main focus. SMS acceleration techniques are only just beginning. It's amazing how fast scanning is becoming maintaining excellent image quality.

Outside of work ...

Being an applications specialist is not just a job, it's a lifestyle. I have been able to see so much of Australia, New Zealand, China, and Europe working with Siemens. I think if I could have a month off I would still use it to travel. Travel is a passion of mine and always has been. Having said that priorities change and now that I'm partnered with 2 dogs I love staying at home. Perhaps with a month off we could hire a campervan and explore without heading to the airport!