

**Missed lesion on MRI scan
15HDC00685, 22 March 2018**

*General radiologist ~ Radiology service ~
Medulloblastoma ~ MRI ~ Lesion ~ Right 4(1)*

A 10-year-old girl was diagnosed with high-risk medulloblastoma (a brain tumour) and subsequently underwent neurosurgery. Following her surgery, she had regular follow-up MRI scans of the brain for surveillance purposes.

The young girl had surveillance magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans on several occasions over the next few years, all of which showed no evidence of residual or recurrent tumour. She then underwent a surveillance MRI scan that was reported by a general radiologist at an MRI facility contracting services to a local DHB. In reporting the MRI scan, the radiologist noted that there was no suspicion of a remaining or new tumour. However, a subsequent scan identified the presence of a lesion. Analysis of the previous MRI scan confirmed that the lesion had been present at that time and therefore had not been identified by the radiologist. The girl was referred for hospice care and, sadly, she died.

Right 4(1) of the Code requires that every consumer has the right to have services provided with reasonable care and skill. The standard of care applicable in this case is the care and skill that an ordinarily careful radiologist would exercise under similar circumstances. Most radiologists would have seen the lesion and reported accordingly. It was held that the radiologist failed to provide services with reasonable care and skill and, accordingly, was found to have breached Right 4(1).

The case identified some areas for potential improvement in the MRI facility's collaborative working relationships with its radiologists and the regional DHB.