



Leaders in Imaging Quality, Safety and Education

News



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Leveraging Experience in Accreditation

Garry Carneal, RadSite President & CEO

Welcome to the inaugural issue of *RadSite News*. Quite frankly, the quality-based mission of RadSite is one of the best-kept secrets in health care. With imaging becoming a more integral part of medical care—and the increased costs of advanced diagnostic and therapeutic interventions—RadSite is dedicated to ensuring that imaging systems are functioning properly and that the workflows surrounding the imaging process are done in a professional and appropriate manner.



Garry Carneal

RadSite, as an independent organization, offers a dynamic array of assessment tools to promote evidence-based imaging. Here are just a few examples. RadSite:

- Collects and measures over 100 different data elements for each imaging system it reviews;
- Assesses the quality of imaging systems for all modalities and in all clinical settings;
- Is governed by a volunteer board and committee system, including the Accreditation and Standards Committees;
- Has reviewed over 60,000 different imaging systems located at about 23,000 imaging facilities across the United States;
- Is supporting a number of consumer-centered initiatives to promote patient safety; and
- Is pursuing a number of exciting research initiatives in 2012 that will promote better public policy decision-making.

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CHAIR'S CORNER RadSite—Solving Problems in Radiology

Cherrill Farnsworth, RadSite Founder and Advisory Board Chair



Cherrill Farnsworth

I have always been a problem solver, and that very quality led me to build my own companies early on in my career. Each company was created as a solution to a particular problem, and RadSite is no exception.

In 1987, I formed TME, a company that built imaging centers for universities and large hospital radiology departments. I was stunned to discover that most of the equipment involved in imaging created significant radiation and cancer risks. At the time, the only system available to evaluate the safety of the machines was an annual physicist's report, which wasn't always required or enforced.

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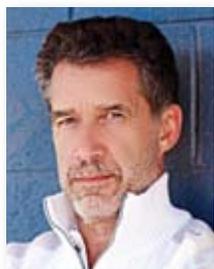
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MEDICAL DIRECTOR'S NOTES

RadSite on Radiation Safety

*William W. Orrison, Jr., MD, MBA,
RadSite Chief Medical Officer*

The risk to patients and imaging providers from medical radiation is often considered low. However, the broadly accepted principal relative to medical radiation is to keep the dose to patients and staff “As Low as Reasonably Achievable (ALARA).”



*William W.
Orrison, Jr.*

RadSite helps support high-quality imaging through a series of quality-benchmarking processes relative to imaging equipment, operation and interpretation. RadSite’s safety initiatives include a review of radiation safety policies and procedures as well as ensuring that radiation safety educational programs are in place.

Although there are state and federal regulations to promote proper imaging practices, gaps do exist in most jurisdictions. RadSite’s standards aim to fill these gaps.

In fact, RadSite’s safety program is designed to include all safety regulatory functions under a single national program ensuring that all accredited programs demonstrate the maximum in safety initiatives. Not only does RadSite’s safety program address the issue of potential national/regional variations in imaging standards, RadSite has also identified imaging providers who have forgotten or neglected to register with a state or other agency such that no regulatory activity was taking place.

One of the primary reasons for excessive exposure of patients and medical personnel to the adverse effects of ionizing radiation is unnecessary or incorrect imaging studies ordered by a health care professional. It has been suggested that decreasing the number of ionizing imaging studies is the most effective means of controlling excessive medical radiation exposure.¹ RadSite addresses this issue through its radiation safety educational program and by helping publish the *Medical Imaging Consultant*, a reference text guiding health care professionals to the most effective, safe and appropriate imaging procedures for a given

medical condition. This text not only includes current literature—referenced recommendations for best practices in medical imaging—it also includes an estimated radiation dose and risk for each procedure.²

Keeping the radiation dose to patients and health care personnel “as low as reasonably achievable” is of paramount importance. For more information on RadSite’s programs and safety initiatives, please visit www.radsitequality.com. ●

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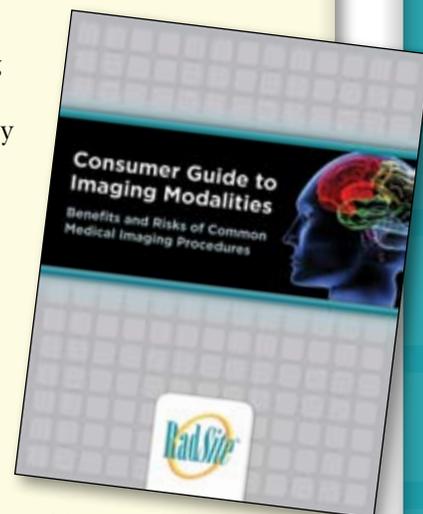
- ¹ Brenner DJ and Hall EJ. “Computed Tomography: An Increasing Source of Radiation Exposure”, *N Engl J Med* 2007;357:2277-84
- ² Orrison WW Jr, Hanson EH, Patton PW, Bbosale PR, DeFrance T, Siegel MJ, Roach CJ, Battista NK, Hiatt MD, and Glinski MD. *Medical Imaging Consultant*. HealthHelp, Inc. and RadSite, Houston, TX: 2011 (195 pages)

RadSite Publishes Consumer Guide to Imaging Modalities

RadSite has published the first in a series of issue briefs to inform consumers about appropriate use of imaging procedures. The issue brief, *Consumer Guide to RadSite Modalities: Benefits and Risks of Common Medical Imaging Procedures*, reviews common imaging modalities that are available today in language geared for the layperson.

“RadSite is always seeking to expand its mission of promoting quality, safety, and education,” says Garry Carneal, RadSite’s president & CEO.

To download a complimentary copy of the issue brief, go to www.radsitequality.com. Alice Sowinski, RadSite’s standards coordinator, played a central role in researching and drafting this guide. ●



Physics Revolutionizes Medical Imaging

*Stewart Bushong, ScD, FAAPM, FACR,
Chief Physics Officer*

If one were a resident in radiology at Baylor College of Medicine in say 1970, the only imaging modalities that were addressed during the four-year program were radiography and fluoroscopy.

What a difference a few decades make. Now, in addition to radiography and fluoroscopy, residents who completed the most recent program also had to acquire a wealth of knowledge in diagnostic ultrasound, planar nuclear medicine imaging, screen-film mammography, computed tomography (CT), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), single photon emission computed tomography (SPECT), computed radiography, digital radiography, digital mammography, digital fluoroscopy, and positron emission tomography.

It is because of physics that medical imaging has advanced at such an incredible pace. Each of the above imaging modalities produces images with characteristic properties that are different from one another and require intense study on the part of the resident radiologist.

The very first Nobel Prize in Physics was awarded to Wilhelm Conrad Roentgen in 1901 for the discovery of x-rays. Since then, 20 of the Nobel Prizes in Physics have been awarded for discoveries that directly impacted medical imaging. Computed tomography, magnetic resonance imaging, and nuclear medicine imaging with radioisotopes were directly rewarded with a Nobel Prize in Physics.



Stewart Bushong

Students at the Grady Memorial Hospital in Atlanta, GA, printed t-shirts as a fundraising project, which they sold at the annual meeting of the Georgia Radiologic Technology Society. The t-shirts read, “No matter what the task, we all want to do it faster and medical imaging is no exception, Dr. Bushong.”

I don’t remember writing that phrase in the 8th edition of *Radiologic Science for Technologists*, but the students did, and thought it important enough to use in a fundraising project. As a general statement, each advance in medical imaging over the past century has resulted in better images with less patient radiation dose—and in less time.

Stay tuned to future columns for more on the contributions of physics to medical imaging. I’ve only touched the surface. ●

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

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Prior to joining RadSite, I had the privilege to build one of the premier accreditation organizations in the United States. As president & CEO of URAC for almost 10 years, I had the opportunity to lead a dedicated team of staff and volunteers to diversify its quality-based mission from a single, specialty accreditation agency to one that offered 16 new accreditation programs.

For the past year, I have led a new team of staff members and volunteers to expand RadSite’s quality advantages through a number of best-in-class initiatives.

Please contact me with any questions or comments about RadSite’s mission or its newsletter at (855) 440-6001 or carneal@radsitequality.com. ●

RadSite Announces Radiation Safety Webinar

In this eye-opening and informative presentation, William W. Orrison, Jr., MD, MBA, RadSite’s chief medical director, discusses the urgent need for consistent quality standards for diagnostic imaging in America. When equipped with the most complete and current data, patients and their attending physicians can make informed decisions. To download and view the webinar, please visit www.radsitequality.com. ●



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Junellen Neese

RadSite’s director of program development, Junellen Neese, has one claim to fame that no one else can assert—she is the most tenured employee at RadSite. With a passion for RadSite, she used technology and web interface development to design and implement a number of software



Junellen Neese

programs proven invaluable to the company. Her business side is kept in balance with a love of travel and culinary arts. Whether it’s the computer or the grill, Junellen is always cooking up something exciting.

Among her accomplishments—besides making a terrific Chicken Cacciatore—is development

of the computer program that allows RadSite participants to complete their assessment online. The user-friendly process is backed by a professional support team.

to see a genuine concern for radiation safety and receive such positive feedback about what RadSite is doing about it.”

After 13 years in the travel industry—she was head of the international division of AeroMéxico Airline’s Customer Service Department—Neese worked on some innovative projects at Enron developing web interfaces to support meteorologists and gas trading activities.

She joined HealthHelp, RadSite’s parent company, in 2005. Initially brought on board to develop HealthHelp’s RadSite Assessment Program, Neese became the first full-time employee dedicated to the RadSite program. Today she is focused on ensuring RadSite’s growth and that future opportunities have a positive impact on medical imaging and quality.

When Junellen isn’t being consumed by her many responsibilities at RadSite, she enjoys spending time with her two daughters and her three rescue pets—a Great Pyrenees dog and her two Maine Coon cats.

Junellen has traveled the world extensively. She has visited Asia, Europe, Central and South America, and speaks Spanish and French. For her next trip, she hopes to visit Costa Rica with her daughters.

“It was nice to see a genuine concern for radiation safety and receive such positive feedback about what RadSite is doing about it.”

“I always thought health care was a very important and necessary industry,” Neese says. “I developed RadSite’s software and learned about radiology as I went along. I love designing intuitive interfaces and enjoy executing it in a way that allows people to use technology efficiently and, therefore, have the opportunity to spend more time face-to-face with customers.”

Neese recently represented RadSite at the Radiological Society of North America Conference (RSNA) in Chicago. “I talked to a lot of people in the imaging field and everyone is extremely enthusiastic about the importance of what we are doing as a company, and they believe the need for a program like ours is past due,” she says. “It was nice

“I believe food and travel go hand in hand, and sometimes I think the only way I know geography is based on the great places where I’ve sampled local cuisine,” notes Neese.

As for the future of RadSite and radiation safety, Neese replies, “I would like to see radiation safety become a household term among the American public.” Furthermore, she notes, “I would love to see RadSite in the forefront of public awareness efforts to promote safety and benefits of diagnostic radiology. Helping RadSite reach the objective is among the most meaningful things I can imagine doing, so that drives me to do everything I possibly can to make it happen.” ●

RadSite Names Industry Leaders to New Committees

RadSite has appointed several industry and professional leaders to the RadSite Standards Committee and Accreditation Committee, both of which support the organization's quality benchmarking activities to assess a full range of imaging providers in all clinical settings. RadSite established the committees last year as part of an expansion of its critical mission of assessing, tracking and reporting imaging trends.

The Standards Committee oversees development of the new evidence-based quality benchmarks, along with revisions to existing standards, based on emerging best practices along with regulatory requirements. Committee appointments are for one year, which can be renewed for additional terms.

"As a former hospital administrator, I know how critical radiology imaging is to correct diagnosis and treatment," says David Stefan, MS, MHA, former head of a J.D. Power and Associates' healthcare division, and a new member of the Standards Committee. "I also know how important credible, independent assessments of quality and service are to consumers in knowing who to trust."

He adds, "RadSite's mission to bring tested quality and service standards and accreditation processes to the rapidly growing arena of outpatient and non-hospital based radiology services is critical to both consumer and insurer confidence in radiology providers."

RadSite Standards Committee members include:

- William Orrison, MD, MBA, Nevada Medical Imaging Center, Committee Chair
- Jana Chambliss, ARRT, (R), (CT), CMRT, Radiology Expert, Committee Vice Chair
- Ellen Bonner, BA, JD, The Callaway Bonner Group
- Joel V. Brill, MD, AGAF, CHCQM, Predictive Health
- Anthony Defrance, MD, CVCTA Education, Physician Representative
- Angelic McDonald, BS, MS, Methodist Willowbrook Hospital
- Stephen Charles Scharf, MD, Lenox Hill Hospital
- David Stefan, Benefit Together, MS, MHA, Benefit Together
- Robert Ted Steinbock, MD, X-Ray Associates of Louisville, PSC

- Phillip W. Patton, PhD, CHP, DABR, UNLV Department of Health Physics and Diagnostics
- Thomas W. Wilson, PhD, DrPH, Population Health Impact (PHI) Institute

The Accreditation Committee oversees RadSite's certification activities for imaging facilities and systems, which include both the online assessment process and audit program.

Accreditation Committee member Mary Ann Waldron, MBA, notes, "I think everybody believes that determination of quality can be so subjective as to make the metrics hard to determine and execute; this program sets a standard and provides a benchmark for those of us committed to quality imaging."

RadSite Accreditation Committee members include:

- Mark Hiatt, MD, MBA, MS, HealthHelp, Committee Chair
- Julie O'Brien, BSN, RN, MS, Alicare Medical Management, Committee Vice Chair
- Carolyn Core, BS, MA, CPHIMS, Anne Arundel Diagnostics Imaging
- Linda Holmgren, RN, MS, Holmgren & Associates, LLC
- Debra Honey, BSN, MHA, CENP, FACHE, CPHQ, Honey Consulting, Inc.
- John Robert Kirkwood, MD, FACR, formerly of Baystate Medical Center
- Randall H.H. Madry, Preventing Colorectal Cancer
- Christine Petersen, MD, MBA, formerly of HealthInsight
- John Sekerak, TCS Healthcare Technologies
- Teresa M. Treiger, RN-BC, MA, CCM, CCP, Ascent Healthcare Consulting
- Michael Vasilik, BS, MS, Dip, PhD, Eagle Technology Consulting Associates
- Mary Ann Waldron, MBA, Traction Business Development, LLC
- Mary Pat Whaley, FACMPE, Manage My Practice, LLC

Garry Carneal, RadSite president & CEO, says he is pleased with the new committee appointments. "As the country's leading authority on imaging quality and standards, the strength of our volunteers is vital as we gain industry-wide support," he says. "With over 50,000 imaging systems and 20,000 imaging facilities certified to date, RadSite is clearly going to have an impact on the future quality of imaging in the United States." ●

CHAIR'S CORNER

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I also discovered that state and federal governments lacked a system for tracking the imaging systems being installed and their locations. This information came at a time when cancer rates in America were significantly higher than most developed countries, and I believed it to be a significant problem.

This inspired me to launch HealthHelp, RadSite's parent organization, which initially was focused on safety and quality patient care. William W. Orrison, MD, MBA, HealthHelp's first chief medical officer, a radiologist and early promoter of radiation safety in our country, shared my views and also was passionate about the subject.

Under Dr. Orrison's direction, our first engine and data warehouse was created. Previously, in an audit scenario, a company would print films and overnight them to the auditor. No controls were in place to keep the company being audited from tampering with the films. At this time, the only accreditations and sanctions in place were for MRIs, which coincidentally emit no radiation. Dr. Orrison and I believed that every modality, even a chest machine, needed to be accredited for safety.

In 2005, RadSite was founded with the mission of promoting quality-based practices for imaging systems across the United States and its territories. RadSite has partnered with providers, public policymakers and other key stakeholders to improve the quality and safety of imaging practices.

In 2010, RadSite was able to break away from its parent company, HealthHelp, and become its own entity; Dr. Orrison joined the RadSite team as the chief medical officer. I was also fortunate to begin working with Garry Carneal who is a well-known and recognized accreditation CEO in the country, having brought URAC to strong national success.

I am proud to say that RadSite is meeting the original vision that Dr. Orrison and I had for the company. Although there are still mountains to climb, we are moving closer to our mission of assessing, tracking and reporting imaging trends.

Today, RadSite has the largest database of providers in the country and is working with health insurers that oversee approximately 6.5 million Americans. RadSite is applying to be a recognized

accreditation body for our federal government and we are proud to be at the forefront of bringing radiation safety to the American people. ●



Senior Management

The RadSite team is made up of many credentialed experts in the field, including:

Cherrill Farnsworth,
RadSite Advisory Board Chair

Garry Carneal, JD, MA,
President & CEO

Stewart Bushong, ScD, FAAPM, FACR,
Chief Physics Officer

William W. Orrison, Jr.,
MD, MBA, Chief Medical Officer

Annapolis Office

612 Third Street, Suite 2B
Annapolis, MD 21403
Phone: (443) 440-6001
Toll-free: (855) 440-6001

Houston Office

654 N. Sam Houston Parkway East, Suite 340
Houston, Texas 77060
Phone: (281) 447-7000
Toll-free: (800) 405-4817

To subscribe or unsubscribe to this newsletter, send contact information including email to info@radsitequality.com.

Editing and Production:
Schooner Healthcare Services

Communications Team:
Traci Carneal
Jessica Larkin
(410) 863-7301