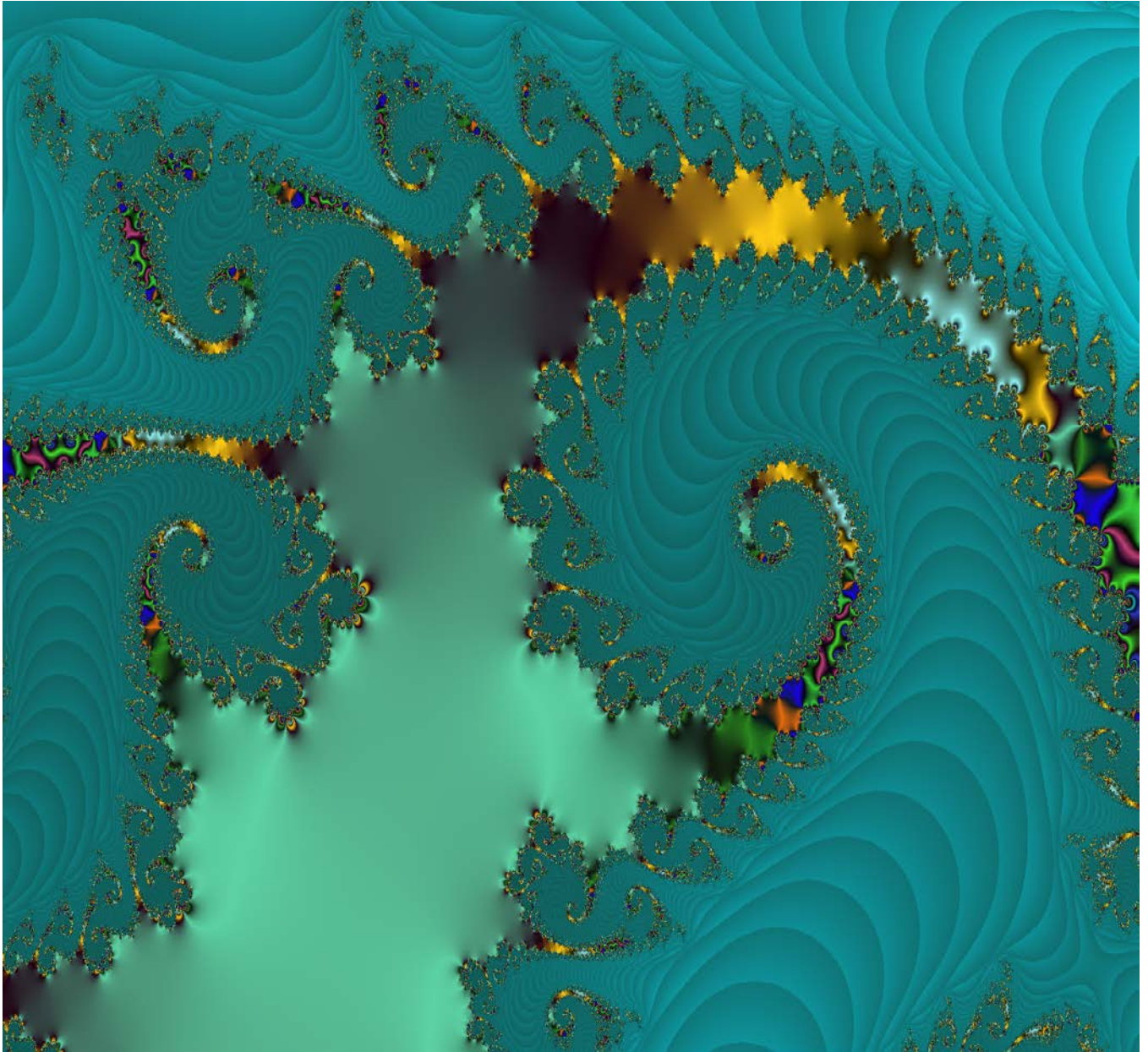


Radiologist Assistant Practice Survey 2015



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American Society of Radiologic Technologists

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Executive Summary

In May 2015, the Radiologist Assistant Practice Survey was sent to a sample of 262 radiologist assistants in the ASRT database. A total of 111 people completed the survey, yielding an overall response rate of 42.4%. Depending on the question, the response rate ranged from 71 to 111.

Demographics

Respondents were asked their gender:

- 53.2% are male.
- 46.8% are female.

Asked whether they are currently working as a radiologist assistant (RA), 74.5% said yes and 25.5% said no.

Respondents were asked several questions about their age and length of tenure in the profession. The average respondent is:

- 42.0 years old.
- Has been working in the radiologic sciences for 19 years.
- Has practiced as an RA for 6 years.

Facility Demographics

Respondents were asked several questions about the facility where they work.

- The majority of respondents work in a hospital of some type: 46.8% work in a not-for-profit hospital, 24.8% work in a for-profit hospital, 1.8% work in a rural critical access hospital and 2.8% work at a government or VA hospital.
- The only other employment setting with a noticeable number of respondents is imaging centers (9.2%).
- Among those working in hospitals, the average number of beds at the facility is 411.7.
- Asked whether technologists at their facility are empowered to report quality or safety concerns without fear of reprisal, 92.7% said yes and 7.3% said no.

Practice and Reporting

Respondents were asked several questions about their practice and their reporting standards.

Asked about the frequency of the procedures they perform, respondents were given the following frequency options for each possible procedure: weekly, monthly, yearly and never. Judging by how many respondents selected "weekly," the most commonly performed procedures are:

- Esophageal study (81.3% perform weekly).
- Upper GI study (80.3% perform weekly).
- Small bowel study (77.6% perform weekly).
- Arthrogram (71.1% perform weekly).
- Enema with contrast (68.4% perform weekly).

Judging by how many respondents selected "never," the least commonly performed procedures are:

- MR postprocessing (84.7% perform never).
- Defecography (81.7% perform never).
- Breast needle localization (72.2% perform never).
- Injection for sentinel node localization (72.2% perform never).
- CT postprocessing (69.9% perform never).

Respondents also were asked how frequently they perform a variety of patient management activities using the "weekly, monthly, yearly, never" scale. Judging by how many respondents selected "weekly," the most commonly performed patient management activities are:

- Reviewing the patient's medical record to verify the appropriateness of the specific exam (100.0% perform weekly).
- Assessing risk factors that might contraindicate the procedure (98.8% perform weekly).
- Reviewing imaging procedures and communicating observations to the radiologist (95.1% perform weekly).
- Participating in patient education (92.7% perform weekly).
- Advocating for patient radiation safety and protection (92.5% perform weekly).

Judging by how many respondents selected "never," the least commonly performed patient management activities are:

- Participating in the administration of moderate (conscious) sedation (62.3% perform never).
- Administering general medications as prescribed (53.3% perform never).
- Monitoring IV therapy for flow rate and complications (48.1% perform never).
- Observing and assessing patients receiving moderate (conscious) sedation (47.4% perform never).
- Performing urinary catheterization (45.2% perform never).

Asked whether they would be willing to participate in a voluntary reporting of quality measures for RAs, 67.9% said yes and 32.1% said no.

Asked whether their employer currently participates in quality reporting systems, 57.7% said yes and 42.3% said no. Among those whose employer does participate in quality reporting, the following systems are most commonly used:

- Physician Quality Reporting System (63.2%).
- American College of Radiology National Radiology Data Registry (44.7%).
- Hospital Outpatient Quality Reporting (31.6%).
- Reporting Hospital Quality Data for Annual Payment Update (15.8%).
- Ambulatory Surgical Center Quality Reporting (7.9%).

Asked what quality measures they think are most important, respondents gave priority to:

- Documentation of fluoroscopy time for procedures performed by RAs (60.3%).
- Rate of catheter related blood stream infections (44.9%).
- Rate of wrong exams performed in the radiology department (43.6%).
- Patient wait time per modality (38.5%).

- Time from order to exam for inpatient fluoroscopy, thoracentesis and paracentesis to exam (38.5%).
- Rate of post dural headaches on patients who have had a myelogram, lumbar puncture, etc. (38.5%).

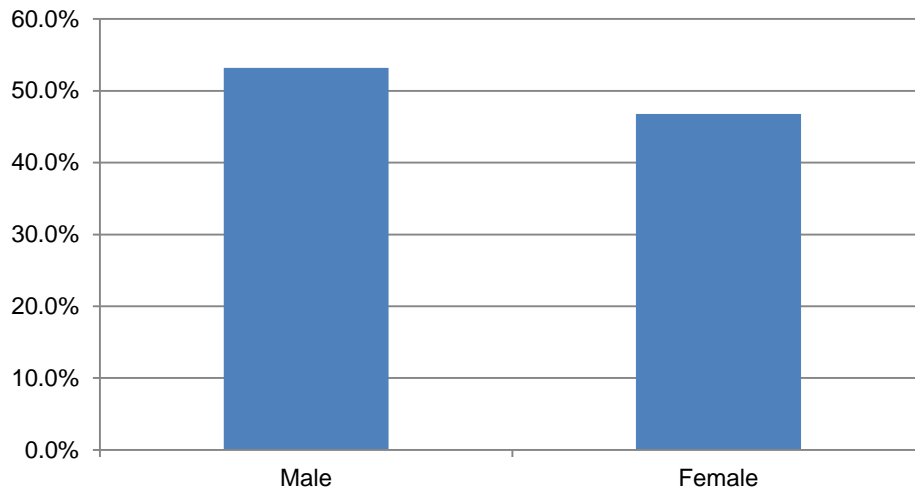
Asked to specify the acceptable amount of time to spend on data entry for quality measurement, 40.3% of respondents said 1-2 hours per week, 30.6% said 1-2 hours per month and 29.2% said 1-2 hours every other week.

Demographics

What is your gender?

	N	Valid Percent
Male	58	53.2%
Female	51	46.8%
Total	109	100.0%

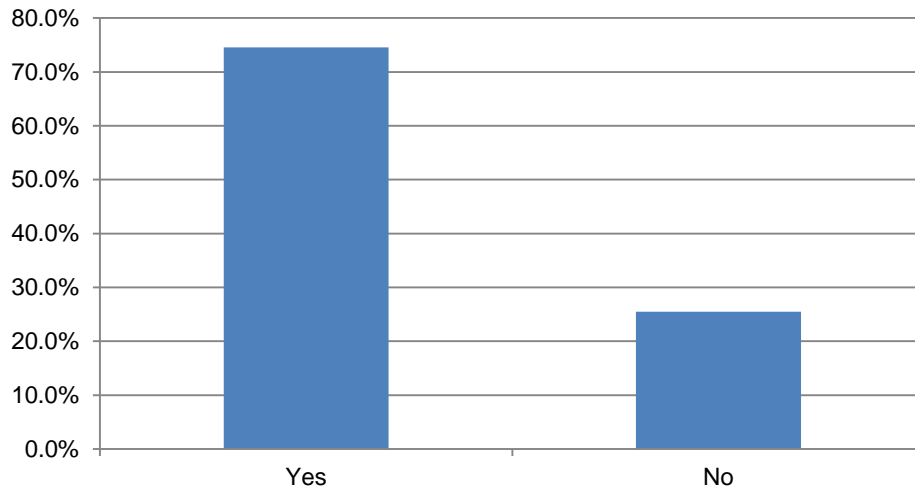
What is your gender?



Are you currently working as a Radiologist Assistant?

	N	Valid Percent
Yes	82	74.5%
No	28	25.5%
Total	110	100.0%

Are you currently working as a radiologist assistant?



In what state do you work?

	N	Valid Percent
Arizona	3	2.7%
Arkansas	4	3.6%
California	6	5.4%
Colorado	4	3.6%
Connecticut	1	0.9%
District of Columbia	1	0.9%
Florida	8	7.2%
Georgia	4	3.6%
Idaho	1	0.9%
Illinois	1	0.9%
Indiana	3	2.7%
Iowa	2	1.8%
Kansas	3	2.7%
Kentucky	1	0.9%
Maryland	2	1.8%
Massachusetts	6	5.4%
Michigan	4	3.6%

	N	Valid Percent
Mississippi	1	0.9%
Missouri	3	2.7%
Montana	1	0.9%
Nevada	1	0.9%
New Jersey	1	0.9%
New York	12	10.8%
North Carolina	6	5.4%
Ohio	5	4.5%
Oklahoma	1	0.9%
Oregon	1	0.9%
Pennsylvania	5	4.5%
Tennessee	5	4.5%
Texas	7	6.3%
Utah	1	0.9%
Vermont	1	0.9%
Virginia	4	3.6%
Washington	2	1.8%

Age and length of time in profession:

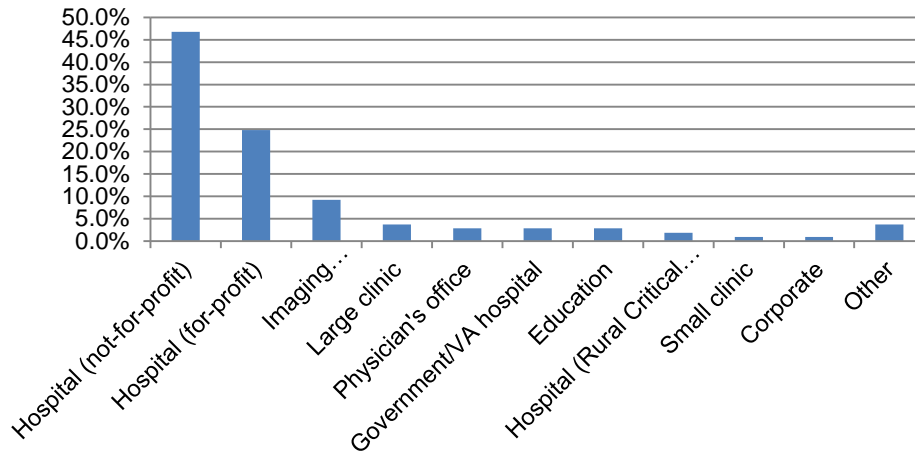
	N	Mean	SD	Percentiles				
				5th	25th	50th	75th	95th
In what year were you born? (please list year only, in 4-digit format)	111	1973	9	1958	1966	1974	1980	1987
Age: (derived from birth year)	111	42	9	57	49	41	35	28
How many years have you practiced in the radiologic sciences?	108	19	9	7	10	18	25	36
How many years have you practiced as a Radiologist Assistant (RA)?	109	6	4	0	3	6	9	13

Facility Demographics

In which employment setting do you practice most of the time?

	N	Valid Percent
Hospital (not-for-profit)	51	46.8%
Hospital (for-profit)	27	24.8%
Imaging center/outpatient imaging facility	10	9.2%
Large clinic	4	3.7%
Physician's office	3	2.8%
Government/VA hospital	3	2.8%
Education	3	2.8%
Hospital (Rural Critical Access)	2	1.8%
Small clinic	1	0.9%
Corporate	1	0.9%
Other	4	3.7%
Total	109	100.0%

In which employment setting do you practice most of the time?



If you selected "other" for the above question, In which employment setting do you practice most of the time?

employee of the state, work both inpatient and outpatient facility
Government oversight
Sales
BLANK

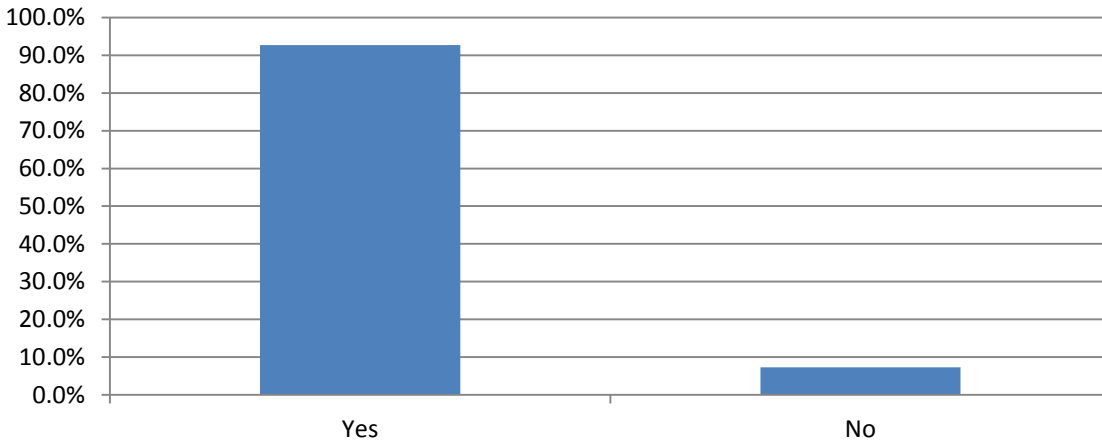
If your primary employment setting is in a hospital, how many beds are at the facility?

N	Mean	SD	Percentiles				
			5th	25th	50th	75th	95th
80	412	413	45	165	300	538	1375

Are technologists at your facility empowered to report quality or patient safety concerns without fear of reprisal?

	N	Valid Percent
Yes	76	92.7%
No	6	7.3%
Total	82	100.0%

Are technologists at your facility empowered to report quality or patient safety concerns without fear of reprisal?



Practice and Reporting

How frequently do you perform each of the following procedures?

	Weekly	Monthly	Yearly	Never	Total
Esophageal study	61	1	0	13	75
	81.3%	1.3%	0.0%	17.3%	100.0%
Upper GI study	61	1	0	14	76
	80.3%	1.3%	0.0%	18.4%	100.0%
Small Bowel study (including enteroclysis)	59	3	0	14	76
	77.6%	4.0%	0.0%	18.4%	100.0%
Arthrogram (radiography, CT, MR)	54	4	4	14	76
	71.1%	5.3%	5.3%	18.4%	100.0%
Enema with barium, air or water soluble contrast	52	8	0	16	76
	68.4%	10.5%	0.0%	21.1%	100.0%
Joint injection/ aspiration	51	7	5	13	76
	67.1%	9.2%	6.6%	17.1%	100.0%
Swallowing functions study	50	3	0	22	75
	66.7%	4.0%	0.0%	29.3%	100.0%
Lumbar puncture	44	10	6	15	75
	58.7%	13.3%	8.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Paracentesis	42	6	6	22	76
	55.3%	7.9%	7.9%	29.0%	100.0%
Cystography (including Voiding cystourethrography)	41	15	5	15	76
	54.0%	19.7%	6.6%	19.7%	100.0%
Myelography (cervical, thoracic or lumbar)	41	9	3	23	76
	54.0%	11.8%	4.0%	30.3%	100.0%
Thoracentesis	39	6	3	28	76
	51.3%	7.9%	4.0%	36.8%	100.0%
Nasogastric/enteric &/or orogastric/enteric tube placement	35	13	7	21	76
	46.1%	17.1%	9.2%	27.6%	100.0%
Hysterosalpingiogram	31	10	3	30	74
	41.9%	13.5%	4.1%	40.5%	100.0%
Biopsy (thyroid, liver, etc.)	30	12	4	27	73
	41.1%	16.4%	5.5%	37.0%	100.0%
Peripheral insertion of central catheter (PICC) placement	31	9	4	32	76
	40.8%	11.8%	5.3%	42.1%	100.0%
Port injection	27	13	7	28	75
	36.0%	17.3%	9.3%	37.3%	100.0%
Abscess, fistula, sinus tract study	24	32	6	14	76
	31.6%	42.1%	7.9%	18.4%	100.0%
Insertion of nontunneled central venous catheter	23	6	4	40	73
	31.5%	8.2%	5.5%	54.8%	100.0%
Chest fluoroscopy	22	29	8	16	75
	29.3%	38.7%	10.7%	21.3%	100.0%
Insertion of tunneled central venous catheter	21	4	3	51	79
	26.6%	5.1%	3.8%	64.6%	100.0%
Antegrade urography (nephrostography)	19	18	14	23	74
	25.7%	24.3%	18.9%	31.1%	100.0%
Change of percutaneous tube or drainage catheter	18	14	10	32	74
	24.3%	18.9%	13.5%	43.2%	100.0%
Retrograde urethrography	15	23	15	22	75
	20.0%	30.7%	20.0%	29.3%	100.0%
Breast needle localization	13	4	3	52	72
	18.1%	5.6%	4.2%	72.2%	100.0%
Extremity venography	13	8	13	41	75
	17.3%	10.7%	17.3%	54.7%	100.0%
Placement of catheter for pneumothorax	12	12	8	40	72
	16.7%	16.7%	11.1%	55.6%	100.0%
Injection for sentinel node localization	12	2	6	52	72
	16.7%	2.8%	8.3%	72.2%	100.0%
CT post processing	12	4	6	51	73
	16.4%	5.5%	8.2%	69.9%	100.0%

	Weekly	Monthly	Yearly	Never	Total
Ttube cholangiogram	8	32	22	13	75
	10.7%	42.7%	29.3%	17.3%	100.0%
MR post processing	6	0	5	61	72
	8.3%	0.0%	6.9%	84.7%	100.0%
Loopography	4	24	20	26	74
	5.4%	32.4%	27.0%	35.1%	100.0%
Defecography	3	7	3	58	71
	4.2%	9.9%	4.2%	81.7%	100.0%
Other	23	1	1	25	50
	46.0%	2.0%	2.0%	50.0%	100.0%

If you selected "other" for the question above, please explain what other procedures you perform, and how frequently you perform them:

Response	Frequency
Bursa/si injection-daily. Nerve blocks- daily	Weekly
Due to political and billing issues I have stopped doing more than 50% of duties I had performed 2 years ago. I am transitioning into an IT role because of these issues and will no longer work as an extender.	Weekly
Epidural steroid injections lumbar weekly	Weekly
Evt, rf, sclero	Weekly
Gastrojejunal tubes - at previous position, daily. Current position rarely.	Monthly
Gastrostomy and GJ placement new and exchange. Weekly	Weekly
i place g-tubes, i place ports, i do dialysis angio work, i place neph tubes , i do arteiograms	n/a
In process of starting to navigate patients and pathology reports post breast biopsies working with the women's imaging radiologists of our practice.	Weekly
Kyphoplasty weekly	Never
Lumbar epidural injections: Weekly, Nuclear Cisternography: Monthly	Weekly
Nuclear Medicine CCK and Lasix injections	Weekly
Patient and physician consultations. Imaging ordering assistance. Results review.	Weekly
Patient rounds	Weekly
Perform G-Tube exchanges/removals, tunneled catheter and port removals, perform all H&P's and pre and post procedural assessment of all outpatients seen in Interventional Radiology.	Weekly
Placement of drainage catheter; the biopsy was etc. but I do CT guided bx's; lung, renal, lymph nodes, liver lesion; bone marrow	Weekly
Port placement daily	Weekly
Port, groshong, apheresis and other central catheter removals, stentograms	Weekly
Radiation Safety Officer duties / Radiology QA/ PACS Administration.	Weekly
Sclerotherapy for varicose veins, weekly. Epidural steroid injections, weekly. Sialograms, yearly. Nuclear medicine VP shuntograms, yearly. Bone marrow bx's, weekly. Saline sonograms, weekly.	n/a
Stereotactic breast biopsy- weekly and galactography monthly	Weekly
steroid injection - lmbar	Weekly
Thyroid biopsy, daily	Weekly
Various Interventional Radiology procedures on daily basis	Weekly
Weekly; dialysis management(angioplasty,de clot), lumbar epidural steroid injection, blood patch injections, chemo administration intra-the cal, arterial access, port placement, bone biopsy, bone marrow aspiration and biopsy	Weekly
work in outpatient seeing most of time.	Never

How often do you perform the following patient management activities?

	Weekly	Monthly	Yearly	Never	Total
Review the patient's medical record to verify the appropriateness of a specific exam or procedure and report significant findings to the radiologist	83 100.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	83 100.0%
Assess risk factors that may contraindicate the procedure	82 98.8%	1 1.2%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	83 100.0%
Review imaging procedures, make initial observations, and communicate observations to radiologist	78 95.1%	2 2.4%	0 0.0%	2 2.4%	82 100.0%
Participate in patient education	76 92.7%	4 4.9%	1 1.2%	1 1.2%	82 100.0%
Advocate for patient radiation safety and protection	74 92.5%	5 6.3%	0 0.0%	1 1.3%	80 100.0%
Participate in obtaining informed consent	73 90.1%	2 2.5%	1 1.2%	5 6.2%	81 100.0%
Document fluoroscopy time	73 89.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	9 11.0%	82 100.0%
Document procedure and postprocedure evaluation in appropriate record	71 88.8%	3 3.8%	1 1.3%	5 6.3%	80 100.0%
Administer contrast agents and radiopharmaceuticals as prescribed	69 86.3%	4 5.0%	3 3.8%	4 5.0%	80 100.0%
Provide physician prescribed pre and post care instructions to patients	67 81.7%	7 8.5%	2 2.4%	6 7.3%	82 100.0%
Communicate radiologist report to appropriate healthcare provider	66 80.5%	9 11.0%	4 4.9%	3 3.7%	82 100.0%
Operate a fixed/mobile fluoroscopic unit	59 75.6%	0 0.0%	2 2.6%	17 21.8%	78 100.0%
Perform followup patient evaluation, and post procedure care, and communicate findings	58 73.4%	7 8.9%	3 3.8%	11 13.9%	79 100.0%
Assess patient's vital signs and level of anxiety/ pain	51 63.8%	11 13.8%	4 5.0%	14 17.5%	80 100.0%
Perform physical examination and analysis of data	52 63.4%	9 11.0%	2 2.4%	19 23.2%	82 100.0%
Monitor patient for side effects of complication of medications/ contrast agents	46 59.0%	5 6.4%	9 11.5%	18 23.1%	78 100.0%
Participate in quality improvement activities	46 58.2%	17 21.5%	7 8.9%	9 11.4%	79 100.0%
Assist with data collection and review	38 50.0%	17 22.4%	9 11.8%	12 15.8%	76 100.0%
Perform venipuncture	35 45.5%	9 11.7%	10 13.0%	23 29.9%	77 100.0%
Administer and monitor oxygen as prescribed	35 44.3%	13 16.5%	9 11.4%	22 27.9%	79 100.0%
Write patient admission and/or discharge summary for review and cosignature	35 44.3%	8 10.1%	4 5.1%	32 40.5%	79 100.0%
Administer general medications as prescribed	29 37.7%	3 3.9%	4 5.2%	41 53.3%	77 100.0%
Observe and assess patient who has received moderate (conscious) sedation	27 34.6%	5 6.4%	9 11.5%	37 47.4%	78 100.0%
Monitor ECG and recognize abnormal rhythms	26 33.3%	14 18.0%	6 7.7%	32 41.0%	78 100.0%
Participate in multidisciplinary conferences (e.g. tumor boards, case conferences, etc.)	24 32.4%	16 21.6%	11 14.9%	23 31.1%	74 100.0%
Participate in the administration of moderate (conscious) sedation	21 27.3%	5 6.5%	3 3.9%	48 62.3%	77 100.0%
Monitor IV therapy for flow rate and complications	18 23.4%	13 16.9%	9 11.7%	37 48.1%	77 100.0%
Perform urinary catheterization	14 19.2%	14 19.2%	12 16.4%	33 45.2%	73 100.0%
Other	2 10.5%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	17 89.5%	19 100.0%

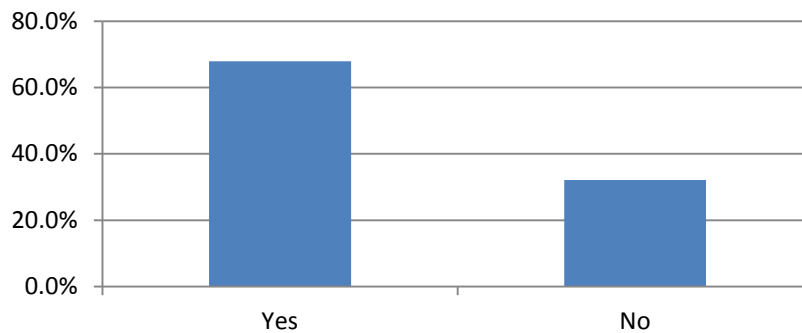
If you selected "other" for the above question, please explain what other patient management activities you routinely perform, and how frequently you perform them:

Research [The remainder of the response has been redacted due to identifying information.]
Radiation Safety Officer duties / Radiology QA/ PACS Administration = weekly

Would you be willing to participate in a voluntary reporting of quality measures for RAs?

	N	Valid Percent
Yes	55	67.9%
No	26	32.1%
Total	81	100.0%

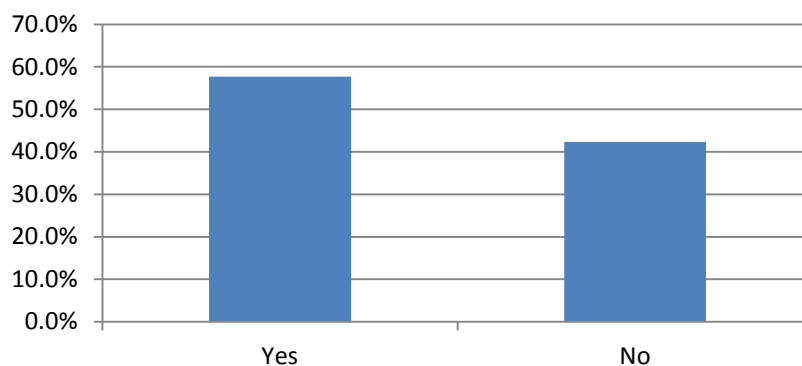
Would you be willing to participate in a voluntary reporting of quality measures for RAs?



Does your employer currently participate in quality reporting systems?

	N	Valid Percent
Yes	45	57.7%
No	33	42.3%
Total	78	100.0%

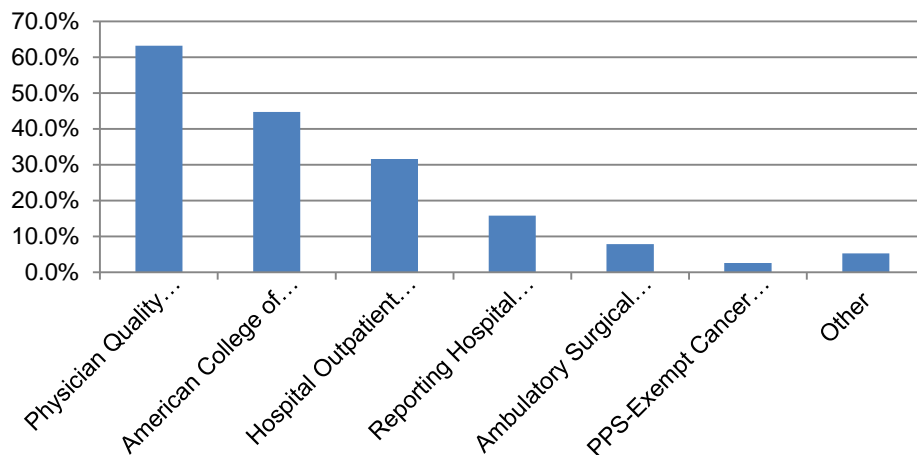
Does your employer currently participate in quality reporting systems?



Which quality reporting systems does your employer participate in?

	N	Percent of Cases
Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS)	24	63.2%
American College of Radiology National Radiology Data Registry (ACR NRDR)	17	44.7%
Hospital Outpatient Quality Reporting (OQR)	12	31.6%
Reporting Hospital Quality Data for Annual Payment Update (RHQDAPU)	6	15.8%
Ambulatory Surgical Center Quality Reporting (ASCQR)	3	7.9%
PPS-Exempt Cancer Hospital Quality Reporting (PCHQR)	1	2.6%
Other	2	5.3%

Which quality reporting systems does your employer participate in?



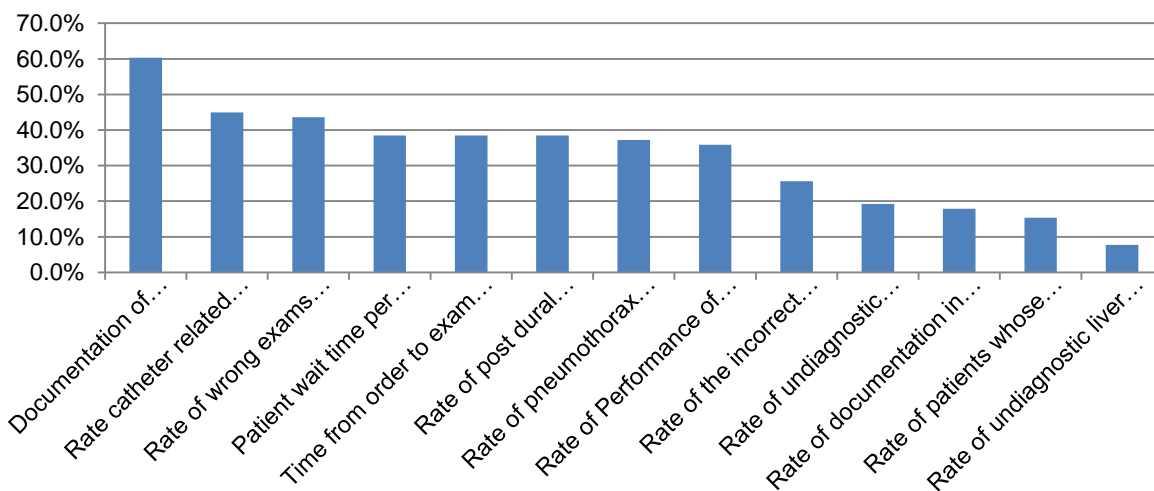
If you selected "other" for the above question, please explain which quality reporting systems does your employer participate in?

Medical device/Implant Quality System
VHA mandated

What quality measures do you think are most important?

	N	Percent of Cases
Documentation of fluoroscopy time for procedures performed by RAs (PQRS Supported PQRS #145 NQF# 0510 Patient Safety, Process)	47	60.3%
Rate catheter related blood stream infections (CRBSI) for PICC, Non-tunneled CVC, & Tunneled CVC procedures performed by RAs (PQRS supported PQRS 76 NQF # 0464 Patient Safety, Process)	35	44.9%
Rate of wrong exams performed in the radiology department (Non-PQRS, Communication and Care Coordination, Process)	34	43.6%
Patient wait time per modality (Non-PQRS supported, Efficiency, Process)	30	38.5%
Time from order to exam for inpatient fluoroscopy, thoracentesis, and paracentesis to exam (Non-PQRS, Efficiency, Process)	30	38.5%
Rate of post dural headaches on patients that have had a myelogram, lumbar intrathecal contrast injection, or lumbar puncture performed by a RA requiring blood patch (Non-PQRS, Effective Clinical Care, Outcome)	30	38.5%
Rate of pneumothorax following thoracentesis by RAs requiring intervention (Non-PQRS, Effective Clinical Care, Outcome)	29	37.2%
Rate of Performance of time out for all invasive procedures performed by RAs (Non-PQRS, Communication and Care Coordination, Process)	28	35.9%
Rate of the incorrect medication administered in the radiology department (Non-PQRS, Communication and Care Coordination)	20	25.6%
Rate of undiagnostic thyroid biopsies performed by RAs (Non-PQRS, Effective Clinical Care, Outcomes)	15	19.2%
Rate of documentation in electronic health record of patient's procedure performed by RAs (Non-PQRS, Communication and Care Coordination, Process)	14	17.9%
Rate of patients whose biopsy results have been communicated by the primary care provider by RAs (PQRS supported PQRS #259 NQF # N/A Communication and Care Coordination, Process)	12	15.4%
Rate of undiagnostic liver biopsies performed by RAs (Non-PQRS, Effective Clinical Care, Outcomes)	6	7.7%
Total	330	

What quality measures do you think are most important?



What is an acceptable amount of time to spend on data entry for quality measurement?

	N	Valid Percent
1-2 hours per week	29	40.3%
1-2 hours every other week	21	29.2%
1-2 hours every month	22	30.6%
Total	72	100.0%

What is an acceptable amount of time to spend on data entry for quality measurement?

