Who Are RAs?
Radiologist assistants are experienced, registered radiographers who have obtained additional education and certification that qualifies them to serve as radiologist extenders. They work under the supervision of a radiologist to provide patient care in the diagnostic imaging environment. The addition of RAs to the radiology team helps improve productivity and efficiency at a time when the demand for medical imaging services is soaring.

What Do RAs Do?
The RA has three major areas of responsibility:

- **First**, the RA takes a leading role in patient management and assessment. Duties in this area include determining whether a patient has been appropriately prepared for a procedure, obtaining patient consent prior to beginning the examination, answering questions from the patient and his or her family, and adapting exam protocols to improve diagnostic quality. The radiologist assistant also is expected to serve as a patient advocate, ensuring that each patient receives quality care while in the radiology department or clinic.

- **Second**, the radiologist assistant performs selected radiology examinations and procedures under the supervision of a radiologist. The level of radiologist supervision varies, depending on the type of examination.

- **And third**, the RA may be responsible for evaluating image quality, making initial image observations and forwarding those observations to the supervising radiologist. The supervising radiologist remains responsible for providing a final written report, an interpretation or a diagnosis.

What Are the Benefits?
The RA improves patient access to timely radiologic care by improving workflow and capacity. The radiologist assistant can:

- Relieve the workload of radiologists by performing exams that the radiologist is not always available to perform.
- Increase productivity by freeing up radiologists to perform the more invasive procedures that are not within the RA’s scope of practice.
- Improve efficiency by allowing radiologists to spend more time on image interpretation and diagnosis.

How Are RAs Educated and Credentialed?
All educational programs for RAs are established at the baccalaureate degree or higher and include a radiologist-directed clinical preceptorship. RAs must be certified as radiographers by the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists before enrolling in an RA educational program. After graduating from an RA program, the individual must additionally pass the RA certification examination offered by the ARRT. Once certified, RAs must fulfill continuing education requirements to maintain ARRT registration.

How Are RAs Licensed?
Radiologist assistants are licensed by the state in which they practice, similar to licensing programs for radiologic technologists. The American Society of Radiologic Technologists has developed model legislation and regulations to act as a guide in establishing RA licensure. Information is available by contacting the ASRT at governmentrelations@asrt.org.