

Greater use of in-patient diagnostic imaging improves patient outcomes without significantly impacting costs

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Hospitals that make greater use of inpatient diagnostic imaging exams achieve lower in-hospital mortality rates with little or no impact on costs, according to a peer-reviewed study of more than 1 million patient outcomes in more than 100 hospitals nationwide published in the November issue of the *Journal of the American College of Radiology* (JACR).

"The results of our in-depth study would indicate that greater use of imaging does, in fact, lead to better patient outcomes in terms of lower in-hospital death rates with no significant impact on overall cost," said David W. Lee, Ph.D., lead author of the article and Senior Director, Health Economics and Outcome Research at GE Healthcare. "This study dealt only with imaging provided in hospitals, but would seem to confirm what many have long suspected — that medical imaging exams save lives."

Researchers examined data from the Thomson Reuters Drug Database (HDD) exploring the association between the utilization of diagnostic imaging services and two key hospital outcome measures: mortality and costs. Their analysis examined data from inpatient admissions that occurred during 2007 in the 102 hospitals in the HDD that provided sufficiently detailed data to support assessment of the utilization of inpatient diagnostic services. The study included all clinical conditions treated in-hospital, assessing the experience of patients with private,

commercial and governmental-sponsored insurance.

"Because use of imaging procedures grew rapidly in the early parts of this decade, payers and policymakers have questioned whether more [diagnostic imaging](#) use is associated with better health outcomes. Based on our research, the answer would appear to be yes," said Lee.

Source: American Roentgen Ray Society

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