

Measuring productivity helps radiology department improve efficiency

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Researchers working in a radiology department at a mid-sized hospital were able to increase productivity and improve efficiency by developing a simple method for measuring general technologist productivity, according to a study in the October issue of the *Journal of the American College of Radiology*.

"Improving productivity and maintaining team spirit are often competing priorities that may be difficult to achieve simultaneously," said C. Daniel Johnson, MD, co-author of the study. "In an era of cost reductions, [radiology](#) departments need to be able to quantify technologist productivity and improve operational efficiency without sacrificing patient safety or care," said Johnson.

Researchers at the Mayo Clinic in Phoenix, AZ, measured the average time needed to perform the 13 most common imaging examinations performed at their institution. Performance of the various examinations was tracked and multiplied by the time allocated per procedure; this measure was divided by the length of work shift to determine productivity. Productivity measures were shared among the work group, and decisions to improve productivity (e.g. whether to fill open positions) were made by group members.

"We calculated the average time spent per examination. At baseline (February 2008), group productivity was 50 percent. Productivity increased during the first year of monitoring and was sustained throughout Nov. 2009 (productivity range, 57 - 63 percent). Yearly

savings from not filling open positions were estimated to be \$174,000," said Johnson.

"Productivity in a general radiology work area can be measured. Consensus among our work group helped increase productivity and assess progress. This [methodology](#), if widely adopted, could be standardized and used to compare [productivity](#) across departments and institutions," said Johnson.

More information: www.jacr.org

Provided by American College of Radiology

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