

ACR white paper prepares radiologists for participation in accountable care organizations

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The latest American College of Radiology white paper, *Strategies for Radiologists in the Era of Health Care Reform and Accountable Care Organizations*, published in the May issue of the *Journal of the American College of Radiology*, offers strategies for successful radiologist participation in accountable care organizations (ACOs). ACOs are intended to create incentives for health care providers to work together to treat an individual patient across care settings — including doctor's offices, hospitals and long-term care facilities.

There is considerable interest within the Obama administration and other important policymaking groups about creating ACOs to both improve patient care and control health care costs. The physician community needs to be prepared for the advent of ACOs in the near future, as the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act also mandates that ACO demonstration projects and shared savings programs for early adopters begin in 2012.

"The development and implementation of these value-added services may present challenges to [radiologists](#) and their practices because they require fundamental changes in culture from a current focus on productivity based on number of examinations interpreted to productivity based on the ability to provide cost-effective care and outcomes," said Bibb Allen, Jr., MD, lead author of the ACR white paper.

"To prevent marginalization, and to more clearly define and preserve the role of radiologists in an ACO model, certain fundamental concepts should be considered. Strategies for successful radiologist participation in ACOs combine the traditional service of providing timely and high-quality image interpretation with a new set of services based on providing additional value and cost-effectiveness to the imaging portfolio of the ACO," said David C. Levin, MD, co-author of the paper.

The ACR is developing a number of tools that will assist members in this transition and will continue to advocate for radiologist compensation for the value-based services and shared savings.

More information: For more information about JACR, please visit www.jacr.org

Provided by American College of Radiology

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