

Radiologists rank themselves as less than competent on health policy issues

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Radiologists classify themselves as less competent than other physicians regarding knowledge of patient imaging costs and patient safety, a new study shows.

The study conducted at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia and Northwestern University in Chicago compared 711 [radiologists](#) to 2,685 non-radiology physicians. "On a scale of one to five, with five being highly competent, understanding of [patient safety](#) was rated as 3.1 by radiologists and 3.33 by non-radiologists," said Rajni Natesan, MD, an author of the study from Northwestern University. Patient imaging costs was rated 2.17 by radiologists and 2.32 by non-radiologists, she said. On the scale used in the study, three was considered "competent."

Radiologists classified themselves as "below competent" in patient imaging costs, [medical malpractice](#), [healthcare policy](#) and quality assurance, said Richard Sharpe, MD, an author of the study from Thomas Jefferson University. "We were surprised by the results. In a time of healthcare reform, radiologists need to be ambassadors of change and must be sufficiently knowledgeable to positively guide reform both for the benefit of patients and for the future of our specialty. Our findings raise concerns that we may be insufficiently prepared for this task," he said.

The study is ongoing. "We hope to use this data as a self-reflection tool to demonstrate where we need to improve to prepare ourselves for the changes, ahead," Dr. Natesan said.

The study is being presented on Monday, April 30 at the ARRS Annual Meeting in Vancouver.

Provided by American Roentgen Ray Society

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