

ACR: Medical imaging study in health affairs incomplete and potentially misleading

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In response to a study published in the August issue of *Health Affairs* regarding declining medical imaging use in recent years, the American College of Radiology (ACR) released a statement explaining that physician education efforts and quality assurance steps have resulted in more efficient use of imaging, but that arbitrary Medicare cuts are damaging patient access to care.

The ACR also cited a December 2011 *Health Affairs* article that shows Medicare imaging cuts may have resulted in [physical harm](#) to patients.

"This *Health Affairs* study further supports the fact that [medical imaging](#) scans are being more efficiently used and are not a primary driver of rising [healthcare costs](#). Medicare spends the same amount on imaging services now as in 2003 — virtually unheard of in the healthcare arena. This is likely the case among the privately insured as well. Those who contend that imaging is primarily responsible for rising costs are either misinformed or purposefully misinforming others...Arbitrary, backward looking limits on care may slow or even reverse gains against cancers and other serious illnesses and deny patients access to potentially lifesaving services," said Paul Ellenbogen, MD, FACR, chair of the American College of Radiology Board of Chancellors.

Provided by American College of Radiology

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