

Radiology in 2101: Future of a Radiologist or Radiology Practice

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Abstract

A lot of people come up with queries on what would be the future role of radiologist. Will the role of the radiologist become more primary to the patient management than it is now or will the increasing clarity of images make him less useful, with images speaking for themselves.

In my view radiologist will continue his role and probably will provide more and more information to the referring physician. His domain of knowledge will expand. In the past, the basis of radiology has resided primarily in knowledge of physics and anatomy. The future radiologist will have to provide functional and molecular imaging, as well as continued expansion of electronic imaging, computer applications, and interventional radiology. We will see an integration of functional and anatomical information and applications like MR-PET will be commonly used for brain pathologies. CT scans will become more and more faster and number of slices will increase with adaptations for radiation doses. We will do more and more endoluminal studies and seeing the inside of the blood vessels, bowel and bronchus will replace diagnostic endoscopy as we know today. May be with evolution of MR-microscopy we will encroach on the pathologists domains too.

Radiologist of the future will be more efficient. Radiology volumes will increase tremendously. The average number of studies interpreted by each radiologist will be very high. Digital radiology and picture archiving and communication

systems, or PACS, will offer newer more efficient solutions and will be more user friendly. Proper integration of advanced communication technology into radiology practices not only will improve our diagnostic accuracy and communication with our patients, colleagues, and referring physicians but will also provide efficiencies needed to meet the data overload that already exists.

Subspecialization will become a norm, with some groups providing reports on only some subsets of patients and offer a level of expertise which referring specialists often demand.

There will be an increasing role for a radiologist to participate in the globalization of medicine. The worldwide communication network or internet is making the world "Flat" and as experts in communications, radiologists should assume a leadership role in the globalization of medicine..

May be we will see some turf loss between surgeons and interventional radiologists. Already we see cardiologists and gynecologists giving some expertise into radiological procedures and diagnosis. However, this would be partly compensated by tremendous increase in the volume of such procedures.

Concluding, what radiology in the 2101 will be like is a matter of opinion, I encourage all readers to send me their opinions at sumerdoc@yahoo.com

References

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