

TRA Imaging News

PRINTED FOR THE REFERRING PROVIDERS OF TRA MEDICAL IMAGING CENTERS

PACS to Aid Area Clinicians



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Director of Outpatient Imaging

Soon Pierce county clinicians who choose TRA Medical Imaging Centers for their patients' radiology needs may no longer need to worry about storing or locating their patients' films again.

This is one of the benefits and reasons why TRA is now utilizing the combined advanced technology of PACS (picture archiving communication system) and its secure web server access to patient images and reports.

On-line since September, PACS has the capability to maintain a global database to organize digital images into a central, long-term archive. TRA utilizes

PACS for all modalities except mammography, which is still in the early stages of conversion to digital. Essentially, radiology studies done at TRA are now digital, eliminating the need for film.

A filmless environment guarantees images are accessible at any TRA location. This has a variety of implications including no more lost films. Providers will no longer have to spend

time locating or storing films, since they are all stored digitally. Additionally, films taken after September of 2002, except mammography, do not need to be returned to TRA. Any of TRA's 27 radiologists can access these films, allowing for sub-specialist interpretation and comparison. Digital images also allow radiologists to apply enhancements to images to aid in diagnosis.

A specialized benefit to providers is the web server component of this technology, allowing on-line access to patients' images. PACS sends images to the web

server where they are converted to JPEG format and compressed, allowing for faster transmission times over secure internet connections. The web server

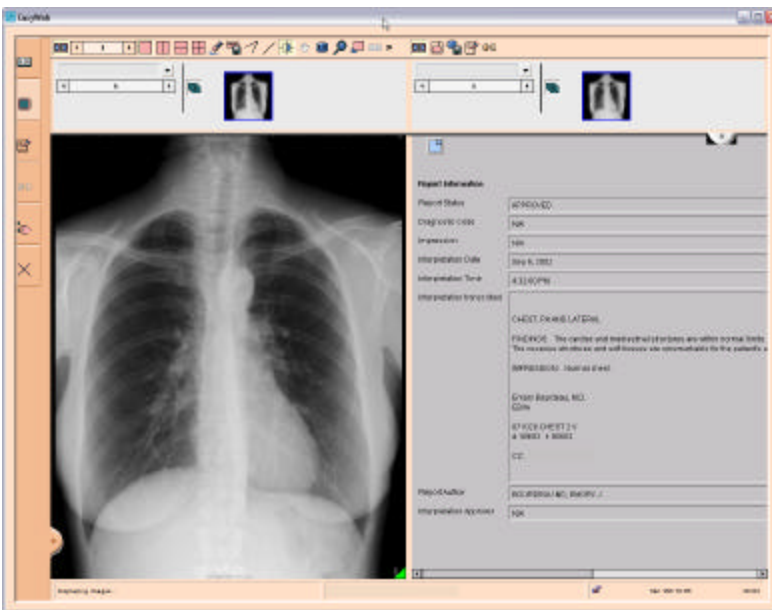
utilizes a specific web client allowing clinicians to view, rotate, measure, and use contrast and brightness adjustments on patient images, all from the comforts of their office or home.

Furthermore, the web server allows for real-time conferencing with TRA's radiologists while they view the (cont'd)



Focus On: Digital X-Ray

TRA uses digital x-ray technology at its Tacoma and Lakewood offices. There are numerous advantages to such a system. Solid state electronics offer 7.2 million pixel resolution, producing images with superior contrast detail. Digital x-ray is also more environmentally friendly as it does not use chemicals to process film. Lost films are eliminated as a patient's studies can be digitally stored and transmitted. As such, digital x-rays can be made available to the provider's office computer via a secure web-based viewer. Another important advantage is that our radiologist can manipulate the x-ray image to extract the maximum amount of medical information, just like an image from a digital camera. This process can eliminate the need for repeat x-ray exposures, thus potentially reducing radiation dose.



A sample of the web server page to be accessed by providers.

same images. This conferencing occurs in two ways, through the use of a 'white board' and also through text messaging.

At TRA's multiple locations, PACS holds the possibility of improving productivity and workflow by eliminating film and paper handling while allowing technologists, aides, and radiologists to do a more efficient job. For the clinician, the improved accessibility to reports and images could improve patient care. Still, with the advancement of this technology and the environmentally friendly implications it makes, TRA is committed to supplying providers with multiple formats for image distribution.



Erik Elam, M.D., utilizes the PACS workstation.

In addition to traditional film, referring clinicians can now request their images on paper, CDs, or sign up for viewing on TRA's secure web server.

TRA will soon be offering training to any providers interested in learning how to access their patients' images on-line. If you are interested in being an early adopter of TRA's web server project, please contact (253) 761-4200, or ccr@tramedicalimaging.com.

Coming Up....

- ✍ Virtual Colonoscopy ✍
- ✍ Breast MRI
- ✍ MRI extended weekday hours, some Saturday appointments
- ✍ CT, Saturdays by appointment ✍

TRA NEWS

TRA Imaging News is produced bi-monthly for referring providers of TRA- Medical Imaging Centers. It is designed to aid in the understanding of TRA and its services. If you have any questions, please contact the following:

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