

Transparency. Quality. Accountability.

AVON, Conn. & PHILADELPHIA--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jan. 22, 2009--Taking a cue from the Obama administration's proposed bipartisan approach to healthcare reform, National Imaging Associates and National Digital Medical Archive today announced a new, collaborative program to drive improvements in the use of advanced imaging technology.

The Image Quality Collaborative is a pilot program to be offered by National Digital Medical Archive and National Imaging Associates. The program will provide participating imaging centers with in-depth, real-time analysis of the CT, MRI, and other radiology examinations they conduct, allowing these centers to track specific trends and measure their image quality and performance against local and national peers.

The result is a clearer picture of the quality of each imaging scan, allowing for continuous quality improvement and encouraging greater accountability on the part of the rendering provider.

"Patients benefit from initiatives that allow consumers to make informed decisions about where they can receive the best possible care," said Michael Pentecost, MD, Associate Chief Medical Officer, National Imaging Associates. "This is consistent with the momentum you're seeing in Washington DC, as our entire industry adjusts to the concepts of benchmarking and pay-for-performance."

The technology behind the Image Quality Collaborative integrates seamlessly with the imaging center's existing computer hardware and software without interrupting or disturbing standard office workflow. This will allow the program to be 100% automated and remain completely unintrusive to the radiologist's daily routine.

"In order for this program to succeed, we knew we needed to develop technology that could work 'behind-the-scenes' and allow the imaging professionals to conduct business as-usual," said Derek Danois, President and Chief Executive Officer of National Digital Medical Archive. "We also recognized that the program had to deliver very tangible bottom-line results that would validate an imaging center's participation."

Within two hours of each scan, thousands of data elements are collected automatically. These data elements are then analyzed, measured and compared against national standards and protocols established by the American College of Radiology and other regulatory bodies. Within a matter of hours, the imaging center receives electronic access to thorough reports on these analyses, providing the opportunity for real-time quality assessment and improvement.

"The real-time feedback helps to close a loop that had previously been unaddressed," Danois said. "In the past, any variability across imaging equipment, modalities, or staff may have been difficult for the center to track or assess. The facilities now have the education and remediation resources they need to improve their quality and strengthen their center's performance and competitive edge."

In reviewing the clinical components of the initiative, Dr. Pentecost also pointed out the consistency of the Image Quality Collaborative with the Comparative Effectiveness Research Act of 2008, currently under Congressional review.

"The authors of this legislation acknowledged that doctors and patients need reliable, unbiased information to determine the best care possible," Pentecost said. "They also found that this data is often scarce and disorganized. But with research, transparency, and accountability, patients and their doctors can make better decisions on treatment, allowing us to improve outcomes and also lower costs. That is precisely the intent of our initiative."

The two organizations are currently reaching out to freestanding imaging centers in select markets. The goal is to secure a cross-section of participating imaging centers to validate the effectiveness and seamless use of the technology, while also establishing core benchmarks for image quality and related metrics. There will be no cost for participating imaging centers.

About National Imaging Associates: Headquartered in Avon, Conn., National Imaging Associates leads the radiology benefits management industry by delivering innovative solutions to effectively manage the cost and quality of diagnostic imaging. National Imaging Associates is a subsidiary of Magellan Health Services, Inc. (Nasdaq:MGLN). For more information, visit www.radmd.com or call 1-877-80-RADMD.

About National Digital Medical Archive: NDMA, a recognized leader in clinical intelligence and clinical performance management solutions, provides cutting-edge products and services that streamline the delivery and sharing of healthcare information among healthcare providers, payers and patients. Established in 2003, NDMA is headquartered in Philadelphia, PA. For more information, visit www.ndma.us or call 888.636.NDMA.

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