

# SURVEY OF IMAGING AUTORELEASE DATA TO THE PATIENT PORTAL

---

Gina G. Provenzano, BS<sup>1</sup>, Lisa M. Masson, MD, MBA<sup>1</sup>  
<sup>1</sup>Cedars-Sinai, Los Angeles, California, United States

**Nothing to disclose**

# Purpose

As health care provider organizations increasingly use patient portals, animated dialog has ensued regarding the automated release of imaging results. We sought to understand current practices around autorelease of imaging reports including the time frames and types of data available to patients via the patient portal without manual input from their physician and possibly prior to their physician seeing the data themselves.

# Background

A survey of radiologists in 2015 concluded that auto-release of xray reports with a 1-week delay was preferred by over half the physicians but fewer preferred to auto-release CT and MRI reports.<sup>1</sup>

A 2015 mixed-method study found that both patients and physicians noted benefits of results released with provider interpretation. Quantitative data demonstrated that patient utilization increased with viewing test results online but the effect was mitigated when results were manually released by physicians.<sup>2</sup>

# Methods/Materials

A survey was emailed to Chief Medical Information Officers, medical directors or other informatician contacts to the twenty members of the US News Best Hospital Honor Roll. Information was requested regarding the autorelease of data including imaging results. Additional information was collected for completion sake via individual institution's online portal help page.

# Results

Ten (50%) of the email surveys were returned. When combined with information from the McChart help page, data from fifteen (75%) of the US News Best Hospital Honor Roll was obtained. Of those 20 institutions, **nineteen (90%) use Epic** as their electronic health medical record. Two institutions do not autorelease imaging results via mychart. **The average plain x-ray release among ten institutions was 5.9 (SD) days.** More complex imaging varied from 1 day to 21 days with some institutions not providing other reports.

To date, no institution provides the opportunity to view actual images through the portal, only result reports.

	Plain X-Ray (days)	Other images (days)
1	3	10
2	3	10
3	7	7
4	3	mammogram- 1
5	3	7
6	2	7
7	14	14
8	21	21
9	1	1
10	Immediately	CT/MRI- 7
Mean	5.9	

Table 1: Results from a Survey and information from the help page of MyChart from members of the US News Top 20 Honor Roll regarding institutions that auto-release imaging data.

# Conclusions

Within the last few years, most health care provider organizations in the US News Best Hospital Honor Roll have begun to automatically release imaging data reports but there is variability among the time frame. Autorelease of data could impact the future of radiology reports.

Radiologists might compose their reports considering the patient as the audience, rather than just the ordering and consulting physicians. This has the potential to impact the quality or detail of the report.

# References

1. Henshaw D, Okawa G, Ching K, Garrido T, Qian H, Tsai J. Access to Radiology Reports via an Online Patient Portal: Experiences of Referring Physicians and Patients. *J Am Coll Radiol*. 2015;12(6):582–586.
2. Pillemer F, Price RA, Paone S, et al. Direct Release of Test Results to Patients Increases Patient Engagement and Utilization of Care. *PLoS ONE*. 2016;11(6).