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Assessment of Patient Preferences for Increased Interaction with Radiologists: Is there a demand for a radiology consult service?

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Authors and Disclosures



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Introduction



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- The growing trend in medicine of increasing patient engagement and empowerment in care can be attributed to numerous factors including increasing medical literacy and technology such as patient portals and social media.
- Evidence suggests that patients who are engaged and active participants in their care have better outcomes and cost savings.
- Although radiology sub-specialties such as interventional radiology and mammography routinely meet with patients to discuss their diagnoses, other sub-specialties remain mostly removed from direct patient interaction.
- Many patients do not fully understand their medical conditions; this may improve with better insight into what these conditions actually look like on imaging exams.
- In order to improve patients' experience in radiology and improve understanding of disease, an in-person consultation with the radiologist may be helpful.

Objectives



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- To assess patient preferences in regards to receiving radiology exam results.
- To assess patient interest in reviewing images and findings directly with a radiologist after completion of an examination.

Methods & Materials



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- Prospective survey – based research study
- 1 site:
 - Major university academic hospital
- Outpatients were surveyed undergoing either CT or ultrasound
 - Patients were offered surveys on the day of their exam upon registration.
- Total of 157 Surveys were collected
- Data collected over 8 week period: August 2017 to October 2017

Survey

► Responses to survey items such as prior experience of reviewing imaging with a physician, having the option of reviewing imaging specifically with a radiologist and comfort level of types of results discussed with a radiologist were recorded.

Patient survey

After your radiology exam is done today, the images will be reviewed by a radiologist. A radiologist is a physician specialized in making diagnoses using images of the body. The radiologist will write a report with the results of the exam. The report will then be shared with your primary care physician or the physician who ordered the exam. We are doing this survey to better understand the preferences of our patients in how they receive the results of their radiology exams.

We greatly value your responses, which will be used to improve our services in the future. Your responses will be completely confidential. Thank you very much for your participation.

What type of exam are you having done today?

- A. CT
- B. Ultrasound

How would you prefer to learn the results of your radiologic exam (CT or ultrasound)?

- A. From my primary care physician or from the physician who ordered this exam
- B. From the radiologist interpreting the exam
- C. From both my physician and the radiologist interpreting the exam
- D. By looking at the report myself, online through the patient portal

Would you like the option of reviewing future CT/ultrasound exams with the radiologist?

- A. Yes, I would always like to do this
- B. Yes, but only when I ask to do this
- C. No

If yes, when would you like to review the exam results?

- A. On the same day as the exam, even if it means waiting longer to hear results
- B. During my next appointment with my primary care physician or the physician who ordered the exam

Which results would you be comfortable hearing from radiologist interpreting the exam?

- A. I am not comfortable hearing results from the radiologist
- B. I would like to hear results from the radiologist only if they are normal
- C. I would like to hear results from the radiologist only if they are abnormal
- D. I would like to hear all results from the radiologist, either normal or abnormal

If insurance was not able to pay for you to meet with the radiologist to review your images, would you be willing to pay for this service?

- A. Yes
- B. No

If yes, what would be the maximum amount you would be willing to pay?

- A. \$10-20
- B. \$21-40
- C. \$41-60
- D. More than \$60

Have you ever previously reviewed your exam images with a physician?

- A. Yes, with my primary care or ordering physician
- B. Yes, with a radiologist
- C. No

Have you ever previously read your imaging report online through a patient portal such as my Loyola?

- A. Yes
- B. No

Have you ever previously viewed radiology exam images online through a patient portal such as my Loyola?

- A. Yes
- B. No

Results



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- A total of 157 patients participated
 - 112 underwent CT
 - 45 underwent ultrasound
- The number of responses varied for each question as some patients did not answer some of the questions and others checked more than one response. These cases were excluded from the analysis of that question.
- While only 4 patients (2.6%) had previously reviewed their imaging studies with a radiologist, 109 patients (69.0%) reported that in the future they would like the option of meeting with a radiologist to review their studies

Results continued



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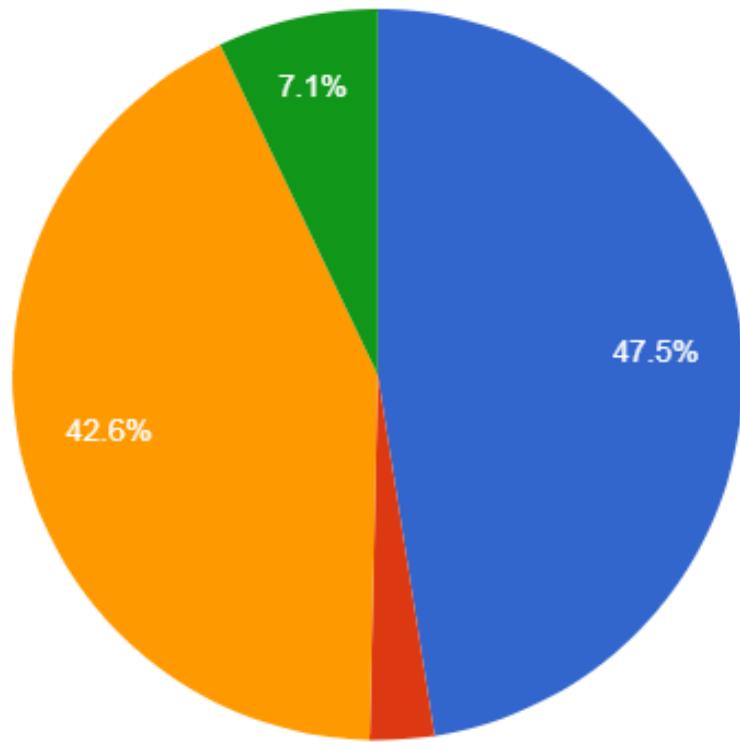
- Majority of patients favored having involvement of their primary care physician (PCP) in reviewing exam results (81.0%).
- 60 patients (42.6%) reported they would prefer to hear results from both their PCP and the interpreting radiologist.
- Of those desiring to hear results from a radiologist, the majority were comfortable hearing both abnormal and normal results (76.8%).
- 54 patients (36.5%) were willing to pay for a consultation with a radiologist even if their insurance was unable to pay for the service.



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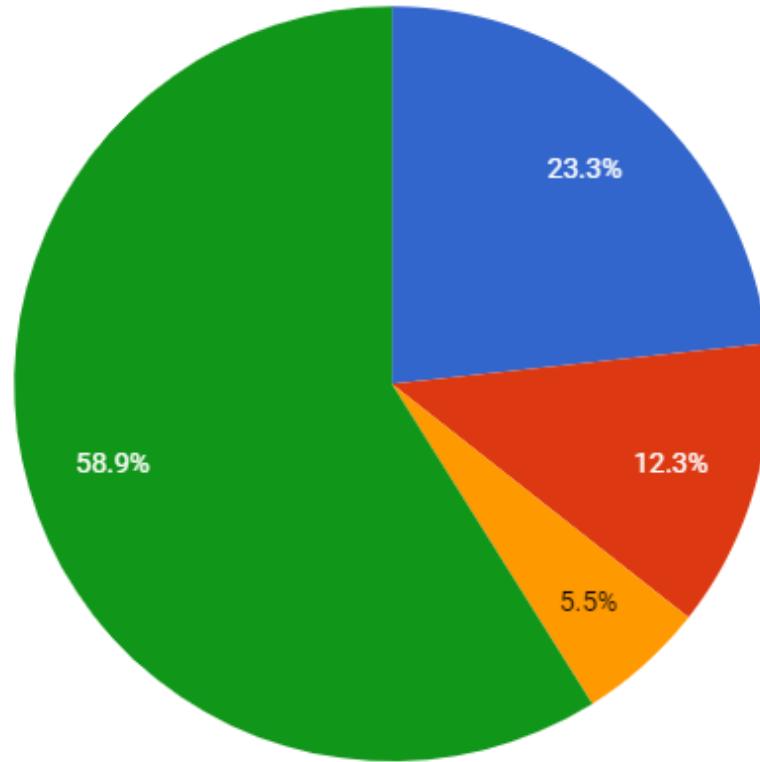




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Limitations



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- Not all surveys collected were completed (survey fatigue on part of the clerical assistants, work flow disruptions, etc.)
- Small sample size
- Sample data provide a representation of patients who are located in a similar geographic area and who possibly have similar socioeconomic backgrounds.

Conclusion



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- With the growing trend in medicine of pursuing patient centered care, radiologists may be at a certain disadvantage given most sub-specialties are removed from direct patient interaction.
- At our institution, there was positive patient feedback in regards to having a consultation session with a radiologist to review imaging studies.
- A radiology consultation clinic would allow patients to better understand imaging of their disease processes, but would also increase their awareness of a radiologist's role. Additionally, it would allow radiologists to bring added value to the current healthcare model which focuses on patient centered and value added practices.

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