Q&A Session
How Does Your Mammography Facility Measure Up?
Learn About the ACR National Mammography Database
September 29, 2011

Q: Do I have to pay my mammography software vendor to get the NMD export button?

A: That really depends on your vendor. Some vendors offer you the upgrade for free and others do charge a fee. So we encourage you to contact your vendor and ask them… and I would say… kind of pressure them to offer it to you for free!

Q: I have been submitting data to the NMD for over a year now. Can I use that data that I've already submitted as part of my PQI project?

A: Unfortunately, the ABR does not permit you to use retrospective data. So you need to be clear that you want to be part of this PQI project and then start collecting data for your first round. While we would like to be able to help you to use your retrospective data, the ABR guidelines on the PQI project are fairly strict, and they will not let you use your retrospective data. We understand this is a time-consuming process, but while you wait to receive your PQI credit, you can still receive other benefits such as information on how you measure up against your peers.

Q: Regarding fees – We have 40 radiologists in our practice, but only 10 of them read mammography. What would our number of radiologists be?

A: For NMD, the fee is only based on the physicians who read mammography. In your case, if there are only 10 physicians who interpret mammograms, your fee would be based on 10 physicians.

In general, we are happy to hear from you and answer any questions that you have. If you think you have a special situation that doesn't seem to fit with what we've just presented, go ahead and call us and we might have a solution that works for you. In most cases, we can find a solution that you can live with.

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Q: Is the data extracted from the RIS raw data or based on data compiled and reported by the RIS?

A: I'm not entirely sure. I think it depends on the vendor that you have. Some vendors build this in as a module on their RIS. It's all derived from the raw data, but I'm not exactly sure how it works. So if you would get back in touch with us with information on your vendor, we can try to help you frame the right questions and obtain this information – either from us or from your vendor.

Q: How and where do I send my intention to participate in the PQI?

A: Contact Lu Meyer at 703-648-8958 or email us at **NRDR@acr.org**, and we'll walk you through the steps. We'll get you set up and help you with whatever you need.

Q: If one of the radiologists codes Category 3 from a screening, will you consider that a problem?

A: No, we will accept whatever valid data we receive. We will accept it and report it as what you categorized. The desirability of using Category 3 is independent of what data we report on. So if there's a radiologist at your facility who reports a Category 3, the record will be added to the registry.

That's something that is useful about the registry, especially with the physician-level reports. If there tends to be one radiologist at your site that tends to be reporting three's for screening, you'll be able to identify that very easily.

After every report comes out, we have a conference call that allows people to exchange ideas and talk about issues that they have. It provides a good opportunity to talk to other facilities that are looking at all these issues.

Additional comments from Dr. Coombs: *From my experience, I think that people have found uploading data to NMD pretty easy provided they have one of our certified software vendors. We do look at the data as it is submitted and we provide data quality reports. If you submit your data, and we find problems with it when it comes through, you can fix your data and resubmit it and it will overwrite your old data with the new data. So it's very easy to clean up your data if you need to. That's something that people should keep in mind. It's not like once you submit it, it's gone. You do have the ability to resubmit before any six month time period to get the cleanest data possible.*