

A CARE BILL UPDATE FROM MICHAEL DELVECCHIO OF THE ASRT COMMITTEE ON RT ADVOCACY AND PAST PRESIDENT OF THE MSRT

Last year's hearings in Congress and the continuing articles about Radiation Safety have left many questions. Foremost among them : How can there be no national standards for the qualifications of individuals who expose us to ionizing radiation through radiation therapy, CT Scans, X-rays, mammograms and other medical imaging and therapeutic procedures.?

It is a good question for many across the country however. . An even more important question would be, what would it take to institute such a program?

One tool to address the problem already exists. A national certification program that defines the qualifications for individuals through education, ethics and examinations administered by the ARRT, the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists. However certification is voluntary. Although most employers require certification, not all do. and even among those that require initial certification, not all require that the credential be kept current.

The CARE Bill in the form of HR 2104 will assure patients that the individuals exposing them to ionizing radiation has met and has continued to meet credentialing requirements. The Bill has been assigned to House Energy and Commerce Committee and House Committee on Ways and Means for review. We need to do all we can to get our representatives to support this Bill, become Co-sponsors and assure the individuals delivering radiation therapy, producing CT images and manipulating new digital radiography equipment are qualified

The CARE Bill would amend the Public Health Service Act and the Social Security Act to make medical imaging and radiation therapy treatment safer, more accurate and because of fewer repeats- less costly. The CARE Bill is supported by the Alliance for Quality Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy, in which the ARRTs 300,000 registrants are represented.

In Massachusetts we are fortunate and have a very good Licensing Requirement that recognizes the credentials and qualifications of the individuals practicing in Massachusetts today. However that is not the case across the country. I strongly recommend that all Massachusetts technologists support the CARE Bill to ensure that the individuals delivering radiation therapy, radiation therapy, producing CT images and manipulating new digital radiography equipment are qualified to do so.

Sincerely,

Michael DelVecchio B.S.,R.T.(R),(ARRT)
ASRT Committee on R.T. Advocacy
Member, Massachusetts Society of Radiologic Technologists
mdelvecchio@partners.org