

## **ACR Responds to IOM Breast Cancer Screening Recommendations**

**Reston, Va** - The American College of Radiology (ACR) has been a leader in quality improvement of breast imaging services in the United States for the past 2 decades and applauds the thoroughness of the recent Institute of Medicine (IOM) report titled "Improving Mammography Quality Standards." The ACR also welcomes the IOM acknowledgement of the impending crisis in manpower facing the breast imaging community and agrees that measures must be instituted to attract and retain qualified personnel to the field.

However, we are concerned about the impact of recommendations to impose additional mandatory practice auditing requirements at this time. While these recommendations for more comprehensive tracking and follow-up likely will improve feedback to the imaging center, the feasibility of implementing this new requirement varies considerably, and may add further disincentive to breast imaging practitioners.

The ACR endorses the IOM call for research to demonstrate which among alternative strategies related to performance feedback will indeed result in improved performance, as well as the recommendations outlined in the report for increased reimbursement, revision of the malpractice system, and infrastructure development.

However, based on past experience, the College is concerned that the increased regulation will not be accompanied or followed by adequate resources to cover added costs. Therefore, the ACR feels strongly that the increase in incentives endorsed in the IOM recommendations as outlined above should precede the imposition of additional regulatory requirements.

Mortality from breast cancer in the United States has decreased by 25% in the past decade and much of this decrease is due to early detection through screening mammography. Worsening workforce shortages threaten to severely limit access to breast imaging services. The ACR has demonstrated its commitment to quality improvement in breast imaging and recognizes that improvements can and should continue to occur.

However, the ACR urges those charged with considering the recommendations of the IOM to be certain that any measures that are adopted are feasible, allow for an adequate period of implementation, and do not reduce access for American women to the possible life-saving benefits of screening mammography.

**To arrange an interview with an ACR officer, please contact ACR Public Relations Manager Shawn Farley at (703) 648-8936 or [shawnf@acr.org](mailto:shawnf@acr.org).**

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*The ACR is a national professional organization serving more than 32,000 diagnostic radiologists, radiation oncologists, interventional radiologists, nuclear medicine physicians, and medical physicists, with programs focusing on the practice of radiology and the delivery of comprehensive health care services.*