



# Quest Physician Update

May 2011



## Transforming Healthcare- Together.

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Dear Colleagues,

Unnecessary radiation exposure from High Technology Diagnostic Imaging (HTDI) is predicted to be the next 'asbestos'.

HTDI (CT, MRI, Nuclear imaging, PET) use has grown rapidly, contributing to healthcare becoming more unaffordable every year. In 2007, there were 75 million CT scans in the U.S. — one for every ten people. Many are not warranted — by some estimates up to 30 percent — adding up to \$30 billion in waste annually. Equally alarming is the unnecessary radiation exposure. The radiation dose from one chest CT equals the exposure from 400 chest X-rays. Over the past twenty years, average radiation exposure has doubled. Experts predict 29,000 future cancers from the 75 million CT scans performed in 2007.

Quality Quest partnered with the Midwest Business Group on Health, Carle Foundation Hospital, and the University of Illinois College of Medicine at Peoria to bring *How Much is Too Much? High Tech Imaging Use and Radiation Safety* to Chicago, May 23 and Urbana, May 24.

The increase in HTDI is due to many factors including technical advances, fragmented care, proliferation of equipment, defensive medicine, aging patients, patient demand, and fee-for-service payment. Decision-supports offer a potential solution to unnecessary tests and avoidable radiation exposure. Embedded in the electronic order process, decision-supports guide the clinician through a series of criteria to help determine and/or reinforce judgment for appropriate imaging. Such supports are being used successfully and improving care in other states.

Conference participants were provided with reference cards to easily equate the radiation dosage of each test by its equivalence in number of chest X-rays. This is information that is hard to find. Please contact us for your card.

The following speakers and panelists participated: **In Chicago** - Larry Boress, President of the Midwest Business Group on Health; Dr. Barry Bershaw, former Vice President for Quality at Fairview Health Services; Marla Ludacka, Senior Director of Professional Reimbursement Programs at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois; Dr. Haydee Muse, Senior Medical Director for Aetna's North Central Region; Kevin McDermott, Vice President of Business Application Management for American Imaging Management, Inc.; Dr. Mark Shields, Senior Medical Director for Advocate Physician Partners and Vice President of Medical Management for Advocate Health Care.



**In Urbana** - Dr. Bershaw, Dr. Philbert Chen, physician at Carle and Medical Director at Community Partners Health Plan; Denise Graves, owner of Health and Services of Peoria or HSPeoria.com; Dr. Robert Parker, Chief Medical Officer of Health Alliance Medical Plans; Dr. Michael Taylor, Medical Director for Health Promotion & Disease Management at Caterpillar Inc.



Respectfully,

