

Title: Improving Productivity and Efficiency in a Newly Formed Breast Imaging Center with Limited Resources.

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Category: I – Office Operations, Administration and Programs

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Objectives:

Screening mammograms allow for clinicians to potentially detect breast cancers early. However, with limited mechanical resources, providing these services can become a challenge with a growing patient population. We sought to assess our efficiency and productivity in a newly formed breast center with only one ultrasound machine and one mammography unit.

Methods:

Data from the newly opened breast imaging center were retrospectively reviewed from January 2006 to September 2008. The number of mammogram machines, ultrasound machines, mammogram and ultrasound technologist hours, radiologist work hours, screening mammograms, diagnostic mammograms, ultrasound studies and patients seen were collected and assessed.

Results:

Over a time period of 2.75 years, a total of 15,944 studies were performed in the newly formed breast imaging center: 9542 screening mammograms, 4077 diagnostic mammograms, and 2325 ultrasounds. In 2006 and 2007, the average number of studies done per work day was 17 and 24, respectively. By 2008 an average of 27 studies were done per work day and this represents a 156% increase in procedures done in 2006.

Conclusions:

Since the opening of the breast center in January 2006, there has been a steady increase in the number of studies done. With only one ultrasound machine and one mammography unit, we recognized the need for efficiency early on. Incorporating technologists that were double certified in ultrasound and mammography as well as having radiologists do “overflow” reads on the weekends, allowed for better utilization of the limited resources. Through concerted efforts of the staff and physicians, the breast imaging center was able to maintain the level of efficiency needed to provide care to our increasing patient population.