

Gain Greater Flexibility, Image Quality at Lower Cost Than Electronic Portal Imagers

Radiation oncology departments and cancer centers are going digital. Radiation treatment facilities want to create efficient digital workflow and support paperless patient charts. Computed radiography (CR) scanners for therapy imaging are attracting attention because these systems combine high-quality imaging with the ability to digitally capture simulation, portal localization, and portal verification images.



ALL-DIGITAL CANCER CENTER

Good Samaritan Cancer Center in Downer's Grove, Illinois, opened in the summer of 2002 as a digital facility with one linear accelerator. The center delivers traditional therapy and intensity modulated radiation therapy (IMRT), as well as some types of brachytherapy.

To support an all-digital workflow, the center needed digital portal images that could integrate with their IMPAC Medical Systems Multi-Access practice management software. After first evaluating an online electronic portal imager, the staff selected a Kodak 2000RT CR system.

"We felt the Kodak 2000RT CR system was a better choice because it offered excellent image quality and could serve a variety of imaging applications," says Chief Therapist Cindy Kim, RT (T). "Our radiation oncologists are extremely satisfied with the image quality, and our therapists are pleased with its ease of use."

HIGH-QUALITY THERAPY IMAGES

Images are scanned in just 25 seconds, checked by the therapist, and forwarded to the center's IMPAC ViewStation system for review by an oncologist.

"The image quality provided by the Kodak 2000RT CR system is excellent. This system is also very flexible. It allows for better patient positioning and is not limited to the parameters of the electronic portal imaging system," reports Radiation Oncologist Bill Hartsell, M.D.



KODAK 2000RT CR SYSTEM

The wide latitude provided by CR technology further enhances the system's value. "The 2000RT system's wide latitude improves staff productivity by reducing retakes," notes Mark Pankuch, Ph.D., the center's medical physicist. Additional productivity is achieved by the system's speed and the elimination of film processing and handling activities.

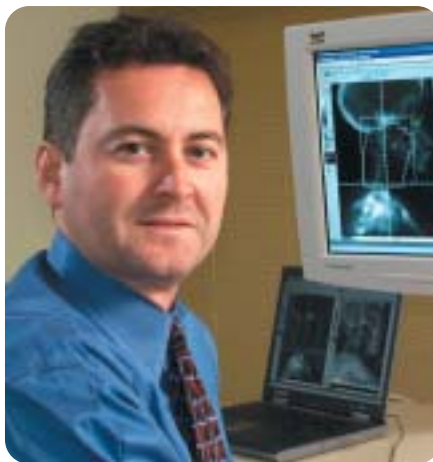
"The 2000RT system is fast and easy to use," Kim explains. "Eliminating film processing and the need to periodically search for missing film studies also saves us a significant amount of time."

Integration was also an important issue, according to Pankuch. "I was determined to find a digital imaging system that could easily interface with our practice management system, and the Kodak had worked closely with IMPAC to ensure that the integration was seamless."

He notes that this link facilitates the center's workflow by allowing oncologists to use the ViewStation tools with which they are already familiar. "And since our radiation oncologists practice at several facilities, they are able to access their patients' portal images from any of our affiliated locations," he reports.

OGDEN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

At Ogden Regional Medical Center in Ogden, Utah, decision makers were also impressed with the smooth integration of the Kodak 2000RT CR system with the center's electronic chart system and its IMPAC ViewStations. The ability to support all three of the center's treatment and simulation rooms sealed the decision.



Radiation Oncologist William Hartsell, M.D., uses the IMPAC ViewStation to view and evaluate portal localization images captured digitally using the Kodak 2000RT computed radiography (CR) system.

When compared to electronic portal imagers, the Kodak 2000RT CR platform not only offers a substantially lower cost, it also can support multiple treatment rooms and simulators with a single system and boasts a large field size of up to 14 x 17 inches.

"We evaluated online electronic portal imagers, but they were too limited and too expensive. The Kodak 2000RT CR system is a much more versatile solution, and it pays for itself quickly by providing digital images for our simulation, localization, and verification systems," Sweet adds.

If your radiation treatment facility needs an efficient, affordable system for therapy

"The 2000RT system's wide latitude improves staff productivity by reducing retakes."

"The 2000RT system is an excellent investment. It is linked with our IMPAC practice management system so that we can view any image from any workstation at any time," says Ogden Regional's medical physicist James Sweet, M.S., DABR. "This system is also much faster and more efficient than using film. That means treatment can begin quickly, which makes patients happy and streamlines our workflow. On the day we went filmless, we shut off the processor and never turned it on again. There are no more chemicals to replenish or film to buy."

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