

Radiology and Medical Imaging

Inside Matters

Spring 2012

Patient and Family Experience Issue

Difficult News in Radiology
Child Life in Radiology
Information Way-Finding



Difficult News Guidelines in the Radiology Department

To improve timely and compassionate communication, the CCHMC radiology department has implemented guidelines for delivering Difficult News to families. In the past, when the Radiologist recognized a serious abnormality or finding that required a significant change in plans for the patient, the ordering physician was contacted by the Radiologist. However, we now have a guideline to help with communication beyond this point, to assure that every patient receives the same compassionate, informative and timely care during the delivery of difficult news in our department.

An essential part of the guideline's success is the collaboration between Radiologist, ordering physicians, nurses, technologists, and a designated Point Person. The Point Person is tasked with facilitating communication between all members of the team, and providing supportive resources. The Point Person is most often a certified child life specialist, or patient and family advocate, but can also be a technologist, nurse, radiologist or patient care assistant.

The Radiologist and the ordering physician will discuss appropriate next steps for the patient. As a team, we will be ready to provide a private space for the family to receive difficult information about the test results (either from you or one of our Radiologists – whichever you prefer), and offer the family appropriate support services. We will then be able to discuss the next steps for the patient and family, which might include additional imaging studies, referral to physicians in other hospital departments, transfer from neighborhood locations, admission to the hospital, or preparation for emergency surgery. Our Difficult News Guidelines, which includes a checklist to ensure we cover all important steps during this stressful time, enables us to consistently support the family during their entire stay in Radiology.

In any of these scenarios, the families are receiving news that is unexpected and possibly life changing. Providing compassionate, informative, and timely care is our mission in the CCHMC Radiology Department and our Difficult News Guidelines are in place to make that possible.

CHILD LIFE'S ROLE IN THE RADIOLOGY DEPARTMENT

IV's...injections...enemas...catheterizations...NG tubes...drinking contrast -

These are just some of the procedures that patients must accomplish in order to complete their radiology testing. Just holding still can be a real challenge for some patients especially in strange rooms with large equipment. When developmental needs and positive coping are not considered, these radiology experiences can become stressful and even potentially traumatic. Child Life Specialists are trained professionals with expertise in helping children and their families during these challenging events. With a strong background in child development and family systems, Child Life Specialists promote effective coping through play, preparation, education, and self-expression activities. They use their developmental knowledge to assess the patients' understanding and ability to cope during a procedure. These specialists use a variety of educational materials to help prepare patients and families for radiology procedures. Age appropriate resources such as pictures, puppets or medical dolls, realistic medical equipment, play models and verbal explanations help patients and families understand the procedure and their role during it. Various distraction or alternative focus items can promote successful completion of their radiology procedures. Some of these materials include DVD's, light up toys, squeeze balls, sensory stimulation toys, music, books, and iPads. Child Life Specialists are available to talk with parents over the phone prior to a procedure to better understand the psychosocial needs of their child and begin collaborating with the parent on ways to best prepare and support their child during their radiology visit. Radiology tours are another way that children can become more familiar with the specific environment they will see during their procedure. This opportunity to see and even 'practice' important jobs, like holding still, can help encourage understanding and cooperation during the actual procedure.

Child Life Specialists are available at the Main Campus and Liberty Campus, Monday-Friday.

If interested in a Radiology tour or contacting a Child Life Specialist, a Scheduling Center agent can help with these requests.

CT and MRI picture preparation materials can be found on the CCHMC Radiology Website at rad.cchmc.org.

Cut-n-Post It

Radiology 411



Did you know there is Radiology test information that you can access, print, and give to families? Information about imaging procedures can be found on the Cincinnati Children's Hospital web site.

H **Health Topics** are comprehensive explanations of procedures that families can review on-line or can be printed and given to families. Many include information about what to expect before, during and after the test. These are located on the Cincinnati Children's website, www.cincinnatichildrens.org. Search **"Radiology Health Topics"** or the **specific test**.