
RSNA Press Release

RSNA Expands Support of Imaging Physics Residencies

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OAK BROOK, Ill. (October 29, 2013) — The Radiological Society of North America (RSNA) has increased its financial commitment to the American Association of Physicists in Medicine (AAPM) to support a total of eight new Commission on Accreditation of Medical Physics Educational Programs (CAMPEP)-accredited imaging physics residencies over the next six years.

On November 28, 2012, the AAPM Board of Directors approved \$560,000 in funding for new imaging physics residencies in either diagnostic or nuclear medicine. RSNA is partnering with AAPM on this program and will provide an additional \$560,000. Each institution will receive \$35,000 per year for four years in matching support of two residents.

Medical physicists soon will be required to complete an accredited two-year residency program in order to take board exams and achieve the Qualified Medical Physicist (QMP) designation.

"Qualified medical physicists are vital to the growth of radiology, and it is critical that they grasp the increasing complexity and quality focus of diagnostic imaging, as well as know how to evaluate the dose and image quality of our imaging systems, and help us to optimize critical parameters to benefit our patients," said Ronald L. Arenson, M.D., the Alexander R. Margulis Distinguished Professor and chair of the Department of Radiology and Biomedical Imaging at the University of California, San Francisco and chairman of the RSNA Board of Directors. "RSNA is pleased to support these residencies through the AAPM/RSNA Imaging Physics Residency Grant Funding program."

John D. Hazle, Ph.D., the Bernard W. Biedenharn Chair in Cancer Research at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center and AAPM president, added, "This requirement for residency training by the American Board of Radiology was implemented based on the recommendation of the AAPM board several years ago. It reflects the need for qualified medical physicists to meet minimal clinical training standards, just like our radiology and radiation oncology counterparts, in order to be considered ready for independent practice."

The requirements for accredited residency training from the American Board of Radiology go into effect in 2014. Dr. Arenson noted that while there are a number of approved residencies in medical physics, most are for radiation oncology. There are not enough residencies producing physicists for diagnostic radiology.

In order to encourage more programs to become CAMPEP-approved, the AAPM and the RSNA have joined together to fund 50 percent of each trainee's cost. After completion of the grant, the programs are expected to pick up the full trainee funding. Three institutions were awarded funding beginning in 2013: Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York, the University of Alabama at Birmingham and the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

"The AAPM, like the RSNA, is committed to making this program a success in establishing sustainable new imaging physics residency programs," Dr. Hazle said. "We very much appreciate the RSNA's financial and programmatic support in this effort."

Applications are being accepted through Dec. 6, 2013, from academic radiology programs, large private practice groups and other organizations interested in establishing an accredited residency program. Go to aapm.org/education/GrantsFellowships/main.aspx?id=12 to learn more and apply.

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RSNA is an association of more than 52,000 radiologists, radiation oncologists, medical physicists and related scientists, promoting excellence in patient care and health care delivery through education, research and technologic innovation. The Society is based in Oak Brook, Ill. (RSNA.org)