A Publication of the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology

From the CEO

Greetings:

The JRCERT Board of Directors and staff extend our best wishes to you and your students as you celebrate National Radiologic Technology Week (November 8-14, 2015).

The JRCERT organization is tremendously busy as we move closer to launching the new Accreditation Management System and begin the lengthy process of revising the STANDARDS.

This issue of the PULSE will help you stay informed on JRCERT activities. Please be sure to read the Summary of October 2015 Board Meeting (October 15-16) to remain up-to-date on the Board’s actions.

Best wishes for Thanksgiving and the holiday season!

- Leslie Winter

Summary of October 2015 Board Meeting

Click here to see a complete Summary of the October 2015 Board Meeting. If you have questions or need clarification after reading the meeting summary, please feel free to contact the JRCERT office.

Accreditation Management System on Schedule

We are excited to be nearing the launch of the new JRCERT Accreditation Management System (AMS). The new system will provide our programs with a streamlined method to conduct accreditation activities. The system is currently in testing phase. The portal, which will allow programs to submit data to the JRCERT, is currently scheduled to be available 1st Quarter 2016. Programs will receive an e-mail notification once the system is available.

We would like to thank our programs for their continued patience as we complete this testing phase – we are almost there!

- Paul Luhn, B.A.
  Information Technology Administrator

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Does your program have a published safety screening protocol for students who have potential access to the magnetic resonance environment? In the past, programs may have defaulted to individual clinical settings to include students in their respective safety screening protocols; however, consistent with interpretations to the STANDARDS adopted by the JRCERT Board of Directors October 2014, all educational programs – radiography, radiation therapy, magnetic resonance, and medical dosimetry - must have a published MR safety screening protocol for students.

Programs should take steps to ensure that all clinical settings utilizing magnetic resonance equipment are informed of the program’s screening protocol, procedures, and any incidents or concerns relating to an individual student.

For more information on MR safety, you may want to access these Web sites:


Also, if you have any questions regarding MR safety or MR program accreditation, please feel free to contact Accreditation Specialist, Jacqueline Kralik, M.A.L., R.T. (R)(CT)(MR), who serves as a resource to our MR programs, at jkralik@jrcert.org.
Preparing for a Site Visit? This Should Help.

Whether you’re a seasoned program director or new to the position and facing your very first on-site visit, you know all too well the inherent stress involved with a visit from the JRCERT site visit team. This is only natural – you want the visit to go the best it possibly can!

To help you feel more comfortable that you have made all the right preparations, staff have developed the JRCERT Program Accreditation Site Visit Checklist. This checklist can also be found on our Web site, www.jrcert.org under the Programs & Faculty tab, Program Resources.

Programs are encouraged to work closely with the site visit team chair in developing an agenda that will result in a well-coordinated and successful site visit.

Important!

Standards Revision

As noted in our inaugural issue of the JRCERT PULSE, the JRCERT Board of Directors voted to open and begin a comprehensive revision of the current Standards for an Accredited Educational Program (2014) - Radiography, Radiation Therapy, Magnetic Resonance, and Medical Dosimetry. Numerous items played a role in this decision; however, the key rationale focused on issues surrounding programmatic outcomes and lack of clarity in Standard Five - Assessment. The unknowns of the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, fallout from the collapse of Corinthian Colleges, planned Obama administration executive action on higher education accreditation, and ever-increasing student loan debt have all lead the general public to have an increased awareness of accreditation and an expectation that schools should be graduating students with the skills and knowledge they need to be successful.

The JRCERT remains steadfast in its commitment to excellence in education through the accreditation of radiography, radiation therapy, magnetic resonance, and medical dosimetry educational programs. Therefore, we have begun this lengthy revision process. We are currently developing thought-provoking surveys to scan the environment of the medical imaging and radiation oncology professions. Some exciting strategic initiatives will be included in these surveys to gauge the communities’ interest in potentially different accreditation paradigms.

We will keep you updated on the project timeline and the distribution of surveys in the near future. Our pledge is to provide a fully transparent process; thus, we will develop a Standards Revision page on our Web site to house all important documents and communications related to the project.

We look forward to your feedback and wish to thank you in advance for participating in this all-important standards revision project!

- Stephanie Eatmon,
Ed.D., R.T.(R)(T), FASRT
Standards Committee Chair
First Vice Chair - JRCERT Board of Directors

Reminders for Site Visits

- Effective with site visits projected for May 2016 and after, the fixed site visit fee will be $900.00 per site visitor.

- The program will be responsible for the arrangement and cost of hotel accommodations.
Following the May 2015 Accreditation Seminar and Assessment Workshop held in Chicago, we were extremely pleased when program faculty from the radiography program sponsored by Harrisburg Area Community College (HACC), Lancaster Campus, Lancaster, PA contacted us to explain how they are implementing and expanding on some basic concepts discussed at the seminar and workshop. Rebecca Shoener, M.S., M.Ed., R.T.(R), radiography program director, and clinical coordinators, Sara Crill B.A., R.T.(R) and Terri Hildebrand B.S.A.H., R.T.(R)(M), attended the seminar/workshop together - all with the idea of gathering as much information as possible to improve their program. What follows is a summary of their feedback.

Everyone on Same Page

The JRCERT Accreditation Seminar and Outcomes Assessment Workshop both stress the importance of a well-structured, appropriately sequenced competency-based curriculum. To achieve this, the communications between faculty, clinical instructors, and staff must be top notch. The HACC radiography program utilizes 28 clinical settings; therefore, it is imperative that clinical activities are well synchronized with program policies and goals. To optimize communications, the program publishes a newsletter and program faculty participate in regularly scheduled meetings with clinical instructors and staff to:

- Review program policies regarding supervision, grievances, etc.
- Review technologist’s role in working with students
- Stress importance of maintaining documentation for inclusion in the self-study/site-visit process, i.e., no last minute surprises!

Additionally, the program facilitates feedback from clinical staff by placing scan cards at all clinical settings that utilize industry-standard Quick Response (QR) Code technology. Clinical staff can then utilize a smartphone with any commonly available QR Code scanning app to access a Survey Monkey® feedback form.

According to the program director, this direct feedback mechanism allows clinical staff to provide valuable, nearly instantaneous, and confidential feedback on students’ progress, concerns, or general comments to assist program faculty. The source of the feedback is kept confidential and is only shared anonymously as general feedback received from clinical staff.

Revising Outcomes Assessment Process

The HACC faculty were well aware before coming to the Outcomes Assessment Workshop that the program’s assessment plan and process would benefit from revision. “We wanted to improve our outcomes assessment process and began preparing in advance for the workshop by updating our mission statement and reviewing the JRCERT’s assessment modules,” said Rebecca Shoener, program director. “The modules definitely pointed out the need for changes to our assessment plan.” Ms. Shoener also stated that the college is in the process of moving to new assessment software, so this was the ideal time to revise the assessment plan for the radiography program.

Some General Comments from the Program Director

- “It was extremely valuable to have the coordinators attend the seminar and workshop with me. We can now work more effectively as a team.”
- “Assessment of student learning is continually evolving. If your program’s plan needs changing, don’t be nervous about making revisions - just do it.”
- “Most beneficial for us was to become more comfortable with JRCERT staff members - put a face with the name - and to brainstorm ideas with attendees from other programs.”

The JRCERT extends its sincere thanks to the radiography program faculty from Harrisburg Area Community College, Lancaster Campus for taking time to share their best practices. Any questions regarding the HACC radiography program may be directed to Rebecca Shoener, rlishoene@hacc.edu. Programs are reminded that the JRCERT does not endorse the use of any specific learning resources or program practices utilized to achieve compliance with the STANDARDS. The JRCERT, however, welcomes feedback from all our programs and, wherever possible, will use the input to improve our seminars, workshops, and the accreditation process.
The JRCERT Welcomes NEW Programs

Congratulations and welcome to these newly accredited programs. Since May 2015, 2 applicant programs have been awarded initial JRCERT accreditation by the Board of Directors. The sponsoring institutions and program officials are to be commended for their hard work and demonstrated high level of professionalism in achieving the "gold standard" in programmatic accreditation:

- Stanly Community College
  Locust, NC
  Radiography

- Pima Medical Institute-Online
  Tucson, AZ
  Radiography

Distance Education

With an ever-increasing number of our programs moving to integrate course delivery via distance education, it is important to reiterate the JRCERT policies and standards that address the use of distance education.

Policy 10.803 provides the JRCERT’s definition of distance education/delivery, online courses, and hybrid courses.

Policy 11.408A explains that the delivery of four (4) or more radiologic science didactic courses (excludes general education courses) constitutes an alternative learning option for the program and requires the program to submit a Notification of Substantive Change with fee.

IMPORTANT: All substantive changes must be approved by the JRCERT Board of Directors prior to implementation. If submitted following implementation, a fine will be assessed.

Five of the six standards – all except Standard Four - contain elements relevant to evaluating a program’s distance education offerings. Programs are strongly encouraged to review the article, “Distance Education Standards,” by Laura Aaron, PhD, R.T. (R)(M)(QM), FASRT. The article was originally published in the

Journal of the American Society of Radiologic Technologists, September/October 2015 (Vol. 87, Number 1) and is available on the JRCERT Web site under the Programs and Faculty tab, Program Resources. The article provides excellent guidance to programs currently utilizing, or considering implementation of, distance education to assure program quality is maintained.
Assessment Corner

The new Assessment Corner area of the JRCERT Web site, referenced in the previous issue of the Pulse, is now available under the Programs & Faculty tab. This dedicated area of the Web site can be considered a “toolbox” of resources to assist our programs with the challenging process of assessing student learning. In addition to the several learning modules on assessment and sample meeting minutes to assist programs in documenting the analysis and sharing of outcomes data with communities of interest, we have now added two new tools:

- “Considerations When Reviewing an Outcomes Assessment Plan,” a compilation of considerations, gleaned from multiple sources, to assist programs in developing and refining their assessment plans.

Both of these resources are available on the JRCERT Web site under the Programs & Faculty tab, Assessment Corner.

Leslie Winter’s 20th anniversary with the JRCERT, October 2, 2015

Back Row: Tom Brown, Paul Luhn, Joanne Sauter, Jay Hicks, Traci Lang, Brian Leonard
Middle Row: Jacqueline Kralik, Janet Murzyn, Betty Matulewicz, Janet Luczak
Front Row: Leslie Winter, Angie Mielcarek, Teresa Cruz, Jean Samuelson

This Pulse Newsletter is archived on the JRCERT Web site, www.jrcert.org, under the “News” tab.