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NEWS

RSNA Press Release

New Funding Will Enable Expansion of RSNA Image Sharing Project

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CHICAGO—The Radiological Society of North America has received a contract from the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering (NIBIB) that provides support to expand the NIBIB -funded pilot project that created the RSNA Image Share network. The contract provides two years of support at $5.3 million and two additional option years at $5.5 million.

The pilot project was launched in 2009 to build a secure, patient-centric medical image sharing network. The Image Share network is based on common open-standards architecture and enables patients to control access to their information through personal health records (PHR) without relying on CDs. Images and reports are sent from the participating sites to an Internet-based secure image repository called the Image Clearinghouse. Patients are instructed how to establish PHR accounts and retrieve their images into those accounts. They use their PHR accounts to maintain and share their images with selected providers, creating a detailed medical history accessible through any secure Internet connection.

"A patient's access to his or her personal medical information is critical for more patient-centric healthcare where each patient is an active participant and partner in medical decision making and in realizing high value care," said Roderic Pettigrew, Ph.D., M.D., Director of the NIBIB. "The RSNA Image Share network provides patients with direct access to and greater control of their medical images, allowing them to electronically share important diagnostic information with their entire healthcare team."

The Image Share network currently includes five sites: Mayo Clinic (Rochester, Minn.), The Mount Sinai Medical Center (New York City), University of California – San Francisco, University of Chicago Medical Center, and University of Maryland Medical Center (Baltimore). The network has been used by more than 2,000 patients since it began operation in 2011. More than 20 additional sites have expressed their intention to join the network and are in various stages of implementation.

By facilitating access to imaging exams for patients and physicians, the network has the

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potential to reduce unnecessary examinations, minimize patient radiation exposure and enable better informed medical decisions. Participating sites also educate patients on establishing PHR accounts.

"The RSNA Image Share network can improve quality, safety and efficiency while engaging patients and families in their own care," said the project's principal investigator, David S. Mendelson, M.D., chief of clinical informatics at The Mount Sinai Medical Center and member of the RSNA Radiology Informatics Committee. "Our patients are successfully using the network to access and distribute their medical images."

The new contract provides for continued expansion of the network. Over the next four years, 40 additional sites are expected to be added to the network, using a computer system called the Edge Server that was developed under the pilot project to connect their local radiology systems to the network.

The entire Philadelphia metropolitan area will be one focus of expansion, as will the Central Alabama Health Information Exchange. In addition, vendors of radiology systems have expressed a strong interest in bringing their client sites into the network, which could rapidly increase the number of participating sites and patients.

The new contract also provides for expanding the cases addressed by the Image Share network. In addition to the patient-controlled model, the network will be made capable of supporting provider-to-provider exchange of information with patient consent, so that participating sites can use it for consult or emergency cases.

The capabilities of the network will also be expanded to support exchange of images for multi-site imaging research. The contract funds will be used to improve the efficiency of image exchange by using streaming technologies and promoting refinements to standards for medical imaging data.

Finally, the new contract provides funding for pilot projects that make use of the data gathered by Edge Servers at the participating sites for decision support, effectiveness research and other data mining applications.

RSNA Image Share is based upon the XDS profile of Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise (IHE®), an initiative among medical leaders, software developers, medical societies and vendors to improve communication among healthcare equipment, systems and software. The goal is to move closer to a universal electronic health record (EHR) and help physicians meet federal meaningful use requirements in practice.

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Note: Copies of RSNA 2012 news releases and electronic images will be available online at *RSNA.org/press12* beginning Monday, Nov. 26.

RSNA is an association of more than 50,000 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*)

The RSNA 2012 Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise (IHE®) Image Sharing Demonstration shows how images and radiology reports can be made part of a patient's personal health record, available securely via the Internet to the patient and authorized care providers. The demonstration features leading vendors in medical imaging and electronic health records and is based on interoperability specifications from the IHE initiative.

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