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Journal

Journal of the American College of Radiology, 12(10)

ISSN

1546-1440

Author

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Publication Date

2015-10-01

DOI

10.1016/j.jacr.2015.06.021

Peer reviewed

Re: "Patients Prefer Results From the Ordering Provider and Access to Their Radiology Reports"



We read with great interest the recent article by Cabarrus et al [1], in which they sought to explore patient preferences with regard to receiving radiologic examination results. We applaud the authors for attempting to tackle a difficult topic that has far-reaching implications for the practice of radiology. As mentioned in this interesting article, the direct communication of examination results to patients from radiologists has been proposed in recent years as a means to increase both value and visibility, although patient and referring physician attitudes about this practice are not yet well defined. As such, the article by Cabarrus et al is a welcome addition to the literature.

We were, however, disappointed that the authors asserted their results to be "the only patient-preferences survey indicating a patient preference for the status quo" while making no reference to our larger, previously published survey of 642 patients, which also demonstrated that patients prefer to receive both hypothetically "normal" and "abnormal" results from the ordering physician rather than the radiologist [2]. Certainly, much more research needs to be done in this area to further elucidate the optimal role for radiologists in result delivery. To this end, our group has been actively working toward a mutually agreeable solution to this problem by surveying both patients and referring physicians. Some of these efforts, including the establishment of a diagnostic radiology consultation clinic (where patients have the opportunity to meet face to face with radiologists), have been

highlighted in our recent *RadioGraphics* article on this subject [3].

Again, we congratulate the authors on a well-written article on a complex subject that affects all radiologists.

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The authors have no conflicts of interest related to the material discussed in this article.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jacr.2015.06.023> ■
S1546-1440(15)00556-6

Authors' Reply



We would like to apologize to the letter writers; their study did indeed precede ours and did reveal a similar preference for patients to receive results from the ordering provider. Their paper was published after

our initial literature review and manuscript preparation; it was an oversight not to have added the reference during revisions.

Our two studies support each other. Each study was large (≥ 600 respondents) and surveyed patients from different parts of the country. Both surveys revealed that patients wish to have access to their radiology reports and the ability to see images from their studies. Although our work collectively suggests that patients may currently wish to receive results from treating physicians with whom they are familiar, this may change in the future. Particularly with increased access to radiology reports and national efforts to increase radiologists' visibility, patient awareness of our profession is likely to increase in the coming years.

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The author has no conflicts of interest related to the material discussed in this article.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jacr.2015.06.021> ■
S1546-1440(15)00554-2

Referring Providers' Knowledge About Studies Ordered for Their Patients



It was with great interest that I read the articles by Rosenkrantz and Flagg [1] and Cabarrus et al [2] in the June