



**Radiology
Consultants**
ASSOCIATED

Radiology Consultants Associated (RCA) have completed a pilot project with three radiology clinics converting most types of diagnostic imaging from a film-based environment to a completely digital environment. In a cooperative initiative with Alberta Health & Wellness and the Calgary Health Region, over the next several months our remaining clinics will be converted to digital. Calgary is on the forefront of the provincial diagnostic imaging IT project.

This initiative is a significant step in Alberta's move to provide health care providers secure access to patient information through a provincial Electronic Health Record. Radiology Consultants Associated, the Calgary Health Region, and other private radiology firms will be implementing this new technology between now and spring 2007. At that time, diagnostic imaging exams and reports in Calgary will be in digital format in over 95% of the acute and community sites. The only exception will be mammography, which will continue to be processed in a film-based environment for the time being.

This initiative will affect how all diagnostic imaging providers will provide results to referring physicians across the province, and will evolve in two phases:

- To provide our referring physicians with office computers access to a digital image, we can provide a CD of the study with an appropriate viewer (a computer program on the CD necessary to see the images on the CD). This is the same process employed by the CHR for the past 5 years. As well, to improve the turnaround time for reports, we can automatically fax reports to your office immediately after transcription. We will be contacting your office in the near future to confirm your preferences around receiving reports by fax rather than by mail. In addition, we are currently investigating voice recognition technology which will further enhance report turn around time. Our practice has been using this technology at the RGH and PLC sites for over 3 years.
- As Alberta Health & Wellness implements the Portal 2006 initiative (a secure electronic storage site for all patient images and records), once an exam has been completed and the report transcribed, health care providers who are appropriately credentialed with the CHR for remote access, and have the technology for secure access, may view both reports and images (in context of the broader patient electronic health record) through a web browser. The web portal first phase is anticipated to be completed in the spring of 2007.

As a user of our radiology services we would like to offer you the following in support of these two phases:

- Physicians who request access to patient images will be provided a CD. The printing of films will be considered on an exception basis based on physician requirements and viewing capabilities. If you need a printed film rather than a

CD, please call Laura Robison at 301-4529 and she will discuss your requirements with you.

Further information regarding the rollout schedule of RCA clinics will be available soon on our website at www.radiology.ca. As the rollout of Portal 2006 continues, Alberta Health & Wellness and the Calgary Health Region will be providing additional information to you regarding this very exciting initiative. We thank you for your support and patience through this transition period while we strive to provide improved patient care for Calgarians.