RSNA preview: Focus sessions explore imaging controversies

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By James Brice [7]

You can tell by the titles of special focus sessions planned for the 2008 RSNA that program committee chair Dr. Robert M. Quencer sees an opportunity to use the sessions to examine tough issues affecting clinical imaging practice.

Nothing creates more tension for community-based radiologists than an increasing workload. “Imaging Overload: Dealing with It,” aims specifically at this galling issue. Dr. David E. Avrin will moderate this session. It is one of 11 focus sessions that will be held between 4:30 and 6:00 p.m. on Monday.

Also relating to time management, and also on Monday, Dr. Ella A. Kazerooni, Dr. Joel E. Fishman, and panelists will explore controversies involving the selection of appropriate imaging protocols for diagnosing suspected pulmonary embolism. A panel moderated by Dr. Howard P. Forman will discuss the implications of pay for performance.

Moving to clinical topics, Dr. A. James Barkovich and colleagues will examine why, when, and how to image the fetal brain and spine. Dr. Aaron S. Field, Dr. John L. Ulmer, and panelists will consider the practical realities of functional imaging. Other Monday sessions will delve into molecular imaging, peripheral nerve imaging, photon counting, nonoperative liver tumor treatments, musculoskeletal ultrasound, and the new reality of combat injuries, including central nervous system trauma.

“There are many controversies that deal with technology and imaging that are ripe for discussion at the RSNA,” Quencer said.

In fact, controversies are the name of the game for another 11 special focus sessions planned for 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday. Attendees will have opportunities to sift through debates concerning emergency medicine, neck node cutoff criteria, musculoskeletal radiology, and pediatric radiology, an interactive session so hot its organizers, Dr. Donald P. Frush and Dr. Lane F. Donnelly, warn that panelists will be ready to r-r-r-rumble (Honest. It’s in the title). There is no less potential for conflict embedded in the six focus sessions that will complete the week on Thursday between 3:00 and 4:00 p.m. Dr. G. Scott Gazelle and Dr. Walter Kucharczyk will surely break new ground in their serious discussion about the likelihood of future imaging services rationing. Gazelle will address the issue from a U.S. perspective while Kucharczyk will present the Canadian point of view.

At the same time, Dr. James A. Brink will moderate a session on managing the risk of radiation from CT, while Dr. Stephen R. Baker and his panel examine strategies for 24/7 emergency department coverage. ACR president Dr. James H. Thrall will update attendees on the critical professional issues affecting radiology, and Dr. Kimberly E. Appleigate and William R. Hendee, Ph.D., will investigate innovative ways to teach physics to radiology residents.

Disclosures:

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