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C-arm Use Policy

Purpose: To establish a policy for the use and/or operation of Mobile C-arm X-ray equipment by Non-Radiologist within Upstate Medical University.

Policy: Only NYS licensed and board certified Radiologist, NYS licensed X-ray technologists or NYS licensed Non-Radiology and Upstate Certified physicians may personally operate any Mobile C-arm X-ray equipment at Upstate. Certification was created for those times when a X-ray technologist is not available and after the technologist has brought a C-arm into an OR or other hospital area, they can leave to set a unit up in another OR or area. The technologist can leave with the understanding that they will return to the original room or as soon as possible or another X-ray technologist will come to assist the surgeon. The X-ray technologist may not be required to operate the C-arm depending on the qualification and desires of the surgeon, but they would be there to provide radiation safety consultation and advice to the surgeon in that suite. Any non-Radiology physician that does not get certified will not be able to operate the C-arm independently and will have to have a radiology technologist present at all times.

Procedure:

The hospital through the Radiation Safety Officer will delineate clinical privileges for the operation of mobile fluoroscopy units based on evidence of completion of specific training as conferred by appropriate board certification or completion of a specific training course(s). The training must include, radiation safety, management of fluoroscopic radiation; and the operation of the specific fluoroscopic x-ray system(s) used by the physician in the facility. Training in radiation safety and fluoroscopic radiation management is in addition to any clinical training or qualifications to perform the specific clinical diagnostic or therapeutic procedure(s) for which the fluoroscopic system is used.

Specific documentation of appropriate training will be required before granting fluoroscopic privileges, and evidence of appropriate training with respect to the operation of the specific fluoroscopic systems used in the facility before such use. In addition, annual in-service training or evidence of continuing medical education in radiation safety and management for all physicians granted certification to use fluoroscopic x-ray equipment will be necessary.

In conjunction with the Department of Radiology, a two part training program was developed that leads to the necessary certification. The first part consists of specific training in radiation theory and radiation safety followed by a test. A self paced study guide is available on-line at http://www.upstate.edu/radiationsafety/forms/training_for_non-radiologists.pdf to be used in preparation for the test, which eliminates any need to take time away from a physicians busy schedule. The test is available from the Department or Service coordinator. The second part consists of hands-on training with a mobile C-arm presented by a licensed x-ray technologist.

Originating Department: Radiation Safety Office

Contributing Department(s): Radiology

References: JCAHO amended Standard MS 5.14