Healthcare

The radiology quality & value Olympics

Imagining radiology as a sport at the Winter Olympics helps us to understand the ways in which radiologists must synthesize their skills and diagnostic expertise with available technologies to achieve quality, value, and improved patient outcomes. At the heart of this synthesis lies the radiologist’s workstation—and the innovations we pioneer in partnership with Primordial to extend and expand the capabilities of PowerScribe 360.

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What if radiology were a sport at the Winter Olympics? Would it be the giant slalom, moving at high speed through a series of gates in constantly changing conditions? Or would it be the biathlon, requiring a rapid cross-country pace with stops for precision shooting? Or maybe it would be figure skating, blending technical and interpretive skill with a panel of judges scoring the performance?

Radiology would actually be all three — at the same time.

That’s impossible of course, but the thought of simultaneously combining those sports captures the multiple pressures radiologists face with the shift from fee-for-service billing to value-based reimbursements for demonstrated outcomes. Radiologists must interpret more cases in less time with greater accuracy while proving the value and results of the work. It’s competitive in the sense that it requires meeting or exceeding demanding standards under constant and increasing time and financial pressures.

Instead of skis, skates, and rifles, radiologists rely on their workstations to apply their training and diagnostic expertise. Just as athletes refine and personalize their gear to maximize performance, radiologists can add capabilities and automation to their workstations to improve the efficiency, quality, and value of their work. The key is to fit the solution to the radiologist’s day-to-day workflow and preferences rather than the other way around.

Take for instance how emerging artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning technologies are driving new automation and efficiencies in the radiology workflow. The Journal of the American College of Radiology’s recently published article on AI’s criteria for success cites better patient outcomes and improved work life for radiologists, noting that AI can also address practical issues to include optimizing worklists, prioritizing cases (like in the instance of potential pulmonary embolism), pre-analyzing cases in high-volume, and extracting information from images that may not be apparent to the naked eye.

The central role of the radiologist’s workstation is why we continue to invest in extending and expanding the capabilities of PowerScribe 360. It’s why we pioneer innovations from Primordial to create customizable radiology solutions like PowerScribe Workflow Orchestration and PowerScribe Lung Cancer Screening. PowerScribe solutions give radiologists worklist prioritization, automated and intuitive guidance, and speech recognition tools for completing reports efficiently and accurately. It also includes integrated access to published clinical best practices for citation in their reports and recommendations to fellow clinicians.

The Nuance AI Marketplace for Diagnostic Imaging is another example of expanding capabilities at the time of reporting. The Marketplace delivers access to powerful new cloud-based AI tools for handling the huge amount of x-ray, CT scan, and other imaging data as part of a radiologist’s regular workflow.

Just as Olympic athletes leverage their training and skills with the right equipment, radiologists can optimize their medical expertise with the systems and tools they prefer, right at the point of interpretation and documentation. Instead of medals, radiologists can gain something even more important to themselves and their patients: demonstrable quality, value, and improved
outcomes across the care continuum.

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**About Karen Holzberger**

Karen Holzberger is the senior vice president and general manager of Nuance’s Healthcare’s diagnostic solutions business. Karen joined Nuance in 2014 with more than 15 years of experience in the Healthcare industry. Prior to Nuance, she was the vice president and general manager of Global Radiology Workflow at GE Healthcare where she managed service, implementation, product management and development for mission critical healthcare IT software. Karen attended Stevens Institute of Technology where she earned a B.S in Mechanical Engineering.

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