
RSNA 2014: Reflect on the Past, Prepare for the Future



The 2014 Annual Scientific Meeting of the Radiological Society of North America (RSNA), which began today in Chicago, formally kicked off celebrations of the [RSNA centennial](#). RSNA President, N. Reed Dunnick, MD, therefore dedicated the programme to all the radiologists that have gone before.

Looking back to radiology's infancy, Dunnick quoted an 1896 editorial from the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA), "The Roentgen Rays": "the recent discovery of Prof. Roentgen hints at future valuable physiologic revelations as well as diagnostic aid...whether it is to be ever realised to any extent is perhaps open to serious question... the medical nature of the discovery is...a largely unknown quantity. Enthusiasm as to its future should be tempered by a scientific spirit of moderation that proves all things before building its faith upon them."

RSNA can now look back at radiology growing from an unknown quantity to one of the most important diagnostic and therapeutic resources in the history of healthcare. RSNA was founded in 1915 as the Western Roentgen Society, and grew rapidly, becoming the Radiological Society of North America in 1919. Today it is an international society with more than 54,000 members from 140 countries. 29% of members are international.

"RSNA is all of us and especially those who have gone before us, without whom we would not be gathered here today", said Dunnick. "RSNA is the voice and leader of one of the most impactful disciplines in medicine", he added. He used impactful deliberately - today's standard or medical care would not have been possible without the discoveries and contributions of radiology over the past 100 years. Our medical grandfathers scribbled their notes in books, and some still travelled by horse and carriages when RSNA was founded, he said. Now we use tablets and can share information instantly. One thing that hasn't changed is the profession's desire to do things together. RSNA has a proud heritage of research and discovery. Radiologists need to do even more to push the boundaries of scientific enquiry. With radiologists' focus on delivering patient-centred care with a focus on research and discovery we will be well positioned to carry on into the next century, he said.

In his 1997 RSNA presidential address Michael Sullivan said that research is integral to high quality patient care. Dunnick agreed that that has been proven time and time again, as radiologists have developed exciting scientific achievements that have changed patients' lives. He cited a survey of physicians' views of the relative importance of 30 medical innovations [published in Health Affairs](#) in 2011, which put MR and CT scanning first, with Balloon angioplasty in third place, mammography at five and ultrasonography at 11.

Radiologists now have the opportunity to bring together data, and must move from descriptive reporting to quantitative imaging, urged Dunnick. We are rapidly entering a new era of predictive, preventive, personalised medicine. Radiologists can do even more to help our patients, and need to ratchet up their ability to explore and develop this new role. We owe it to the patients we serve. The time is right to reenergise our commitment to research.

Dunnick outlined RSNA's commitment to encouraging research, by:

1. Developing the next generation of researchers.
2. Offering new and better ways of educating radiologists. As an example, RSNA's tablet-friendly education resources have 125,000 users and counting
3. Continued leadership in funding through the R&E Foundation. \$3.6 million dollars was awarded to 194 investigators in 2014. Researchers have gone on to attract 40 dollars in grant funding for every one dollar in RSNA grants.
4. Need for new programmes to promote synergy and partnership across radiology and external sectors.
5. Support academic research.
6. Partnerships with industry.

In addition radiologists need to maximise the impact of exciting scientific advances with true patient-centered care, going the extra mile with patients, colleagues in medicine, and remembering there is a person behind the images obtained. Outcomes are improved when patients understand their care and radiologists communicate more proactively with others on the team.

Value over volume is a new paradigm for radiology that offers great promise for radiology's future. More and more radiologists are embracing these concepts, and colleagues in major disciplines are on the same path. The transition period we are entering in will be as important as any in our history, said Dunnick, adding that it is a wonderful time to be a radiologist. Before the new paradigm can be fully realised, there is a lot of work to do, to deliver this in a way that ensures costs are kept affordable. Dunnick concluded by saying that he is personally committed to it, and it is a golden opportunity to truly shape the future of the radiology profession.

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