

#RSNA21: Radiology in Value-Based Healthcare



Dr James A Brink gave Monday morning's plenary session at RSNA 2021, describing radiology's role in providing value-based healthcare. He serves as chair of Radiology and chief of Enterprise Radiology at Mass General Brigham, radiologist-in-chief at Massachusetts General Hospital, and Juan M. Taveras Professor of Radiology at Harvard Medical School.

Drawing from many studies and institutional efforts, Dr Brink shared his thoughts on radiology's value in the health care continuum. Using the colourful example of Nintendo's Mario Kart, Dr Brink defined value and then illustrated how value applies to radiological care. Given that radiology is at the epicentre of medical care delivery, serving every medical speciality, he asserts that radiology must reinforce the value they provide. Radiology must move from 'stewardship to leadership' and reinforce its value to other medical services.

Dr Brink spoke about the importance of eliminating 'low-value imaging' while promoting 'high-value imaging'. Harm and costs outweigh the benefits in low-value imaging. Organisational culture contributing to low-value imaging must be countered with validated metrics, policies and interventions to align patient-clinician motivation and remove biases. He cites many studies and describes how clinical decision support before imaging could guide practitioners to the most appropriate exam. After imaging, it could refer radiologists to the best care recommendations.

Dr Brink emphasises improved quality and better patient experience where high-value imaging, where benefits outweigh harm and costs. Better patient care experience can be accomplished by better patient engagement, virtual care, ambulatory access, and care coordination. Good care coordination requires 'dedicated, unique IT tools and collaboration among multiple care teams.' The overarching theme is seamless and convenient patient-focus care. Dr Brink adds: 'It's really about improving quality, accurate diagnoses and precise measurements, improving experience with timely and convenient service, and integrating imaging care into the care continuum of the patient's experiences.'

He last addresses efforts to reduce costs and increase efficiency. Dr Brink provides evidence of the value of shifting services from hospitals with high expenses to lower-cost facilities like clinics or other ambulatory care settings. Patients should be provided with a seamless, consistent, and uniform experience whenever they are in the health system. Effective communication with patients and referring providers is vital so that both groups understand why an exam may be required.

Source: [RSNA 2021](#), [RSNA Daily Bulletin](#)

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