I. Description

Importation of Outside Imaging Studies

II. Rationale

The process used to import outside imaging studies into the UNC Hospitals PACS system.

III. Policy

For clinical care of patients, it may be necessary to import and store outside imaging studies on the UNC Hospitals PACS system. The importation of outside studies will be performed on a must-need basis, and must fall into one of three designated categories:

1. Formal Interpretation.
2. Comparison Purposes Only (to future or previous UNC Hospital studies).
3. Continued Care Purposes Only (e.g.: Surgical planning), without formal interpretation or comparison.

IV. Procedure

Requirements:

1. Request must originate from a UNC Hospitals credentialed Licensed Independent Provider.
2. Original outside facility CD containing imaging studies and report(s)* of requested exams.
   
   No outside facility Fluoro or Ultrasound imaging, with the exception of Breast Ultrasound will be accepted for import.
3. Completed paper requisition obtained from the Film Management office "IMAGING SERVICES OUTSIDE FILM IMPORT REQUEST", which includes Patient Name; DOB; UNC Health Care MRN; clinical history; and import category type.
4. The patient must have had an encounter with the requesting provider within the last 6 months, or have a documented future encounter within 6 months.
   *outside reports not required for Continued Care Category

REQUESTS FOR IMPORT OF OUTSIDE IMAGING STUDIES

To request import of an outside imaging study, a completed requisition and the accompanying original outside institution CD (copies of outside institution CDs are not acceptable) must be submitted to the Film Management Office in the Department of Radiology. The outside institution CD must contain said institution’s interpretation report. The requisition must include the specific studies that are to be imported, the name of the requesting physician, and a preliminary diagnosis and relevant clinical history. If the CD needs to be returned to the provider after import, this should be indicated on the requisition, and a phone or pager must be provided.

The studies will be loaded into the UNC Hospitals PACS for formal Interpretation, Comparison Purposes Only, or Continued Care Purposes Only use and permanent storage if the patient has an encounter with a UNC Hospitals provider within the last 6 months or a documented future encounter within 6 months. Outside imaging import requests can only be made by a UNC Hospitals-credentialed licensed independent provider (Physician, Physician Assistant or Nurse Practitioner).
1. **Request for Interpretation of Outside Imaging Studies**
   The UNC Hospitals Department of Radiology will allow the import of outside imaging studies for formal interpretation purposes. Request for formal interpretation must be indicated on the completed requisition. These studies will be loaded into the UNC Hospitals PACS, and interpreted by UNC Hospitals Department of Radiology Personnel. Imaging studies older than 3 months will not be formally interpreted unless approved by an Attending Radiologist. The original interpretation report must be provided on the CD or on hard copy (with the exception of those patients being urgently or emergently evaluated), so the radiologist can alert the clinician to discrepancies or findings that may be unknown.

Submission of outside exams for interpretation is a cost to patients, and utilizes Radiology Personnel resources, which are limited. If it is not medically necessary to obtain a formal interpretation of an outside study, please consider submitting the study for Comparison Purposes Only or Continued Care Purposes Only.

Exceptions to the above guidelines will be accommodated if approved by an Attending Radiologist.

2. **Importing of Outside Imaging Studies for Comparison Purposes Only**
   The UNC Hospitals Department of Radiology will allow the import of outside imaging studies for comparison purposes only. These studies will be loaded into the UNC Hospitals PACS but not interpreted by UNC Hospitals Department of Radiology Personnel. Request for comparison purposes only must be indicated on the completed requisition.

A UNC Hospitals imaging exam must have been performed or scheduled within three months in order to load an outside study for comparison purposes only. Instances in which a patient does not have a current UNC Hospitals imaging exam performed or scheduled, the UNC Hospitals Department of Radiology will decline to import said outside imaging.

When a patient has multiple old outside studies of the same type, only the most recent studies will be uploaded. Loading of multiple (>3) outside studies for comparison purposes only must be approved by an Attending Radiologist. There is no charge to the patient in this category.

In cases when the UNC Hospital study being compared to the outside study has yet to be performed, an automatic report will generate, indicating the outside study is for comparison purposes only. These outside studies will reflect an “Approved” status.

In cases when the UNC Hospital study being compared to the outside study has already been performed and interpreted, an automatic report will generate, indicating the outside study is for comparison purposes only. These outside studies will reflect a “New” status. Radiologists may review and addend the automatic report if medically indicated (disease progression, treatment response, etc.).

Exceptions to the above guidelines will be accommodated if approved by an Attending Radiologist.

3. **Importing of Outside Imaging Studies for Continued Care Purposes Only**
   The UNC Hospitals Department of Radiology will allow the import of outside imaging studies for continued care purposes only if said study is to be used for patient care purposes (for example: Surgical Planning). Request for continued care purposes only must be indicated
on the completed requisition. These studies will be loaded into the UNC Hospitals PACS but not compared to other imaging or reviewed by UNC Hospitals Department of Radiology Personnel. No radiology report will be generated. There is no charge to the patient in this category.

Exceptions to the above guidelines will be accommodated if approved by an Attending Radiologist.

V. Original Policy Date and Revisions
April 2015