



Advocacy Update

Quarterly Advocacy Newsletter from the OSRT

MISSION

The OSRT will advocate for Ohio medical imaging and radiation therapy professionals by advancing professional practice to enhance the quality of patient care.

VISION

The OSRT will be the voice of Ohio medical imaging and radiation therapy professionals.

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As a member benefit, the OSRT will be sending out quarterly newsletters to keep its members informed about Ohio legislation efforts we are watching that impact our practice.

What is advocacy and why should I care?

In 1995, the Ohio legislature passed legislation mandating licensure of Radiologic Technologists practicing in the state. This legislation provided just the general framework for the requirements to practice. The Ohio Department of Health, Bureau of Radiation Protection was directed to develop the rules, which filled in the details. This is how the licensure of Radiologic Technologists came under the purview of the Ohio Department of Health and not under a separate licensing board. So our practice is regulated by both the legislative *statute* and the Ohio Department of Health *rules*, which must be in concert with each other. Any change in either of these can have a major impact on how we practice our profession.

Once the statute and the rules were passed, you might think that our work was done. Nothing is further from the truth. **Advocacy is more important to our profession now than ever before.** Anyone can open the licensure *statute* and offer up an amendment to the statute at any time. All that is needed is one legislator to sponsor the amendment. The Ohio *rules* are reviewed/revised at a minimum of every 5 years, so again anyone can offer up an amendment to change our practice during the these reviews.

The OSRT is watching all this for any activity that might change our profession in Ohio.



What is advocacy

There are many health professions that try to expand into other areas.

Here are just a few recent examples of encroachment into radiology areas:

- ◆ Iowa - a bill was introduced (2010) that would allow Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRN) to oversee fluoroscopy procedures and radiology personnel. This went all the way to the Iowa Supreme Court and was ultimately upheld.
- ◆ Kentucky - a bill was introduced that would allow APRN to perform medical imaging and radiation therapy procedures as well as supervise Radiologic Technologists. This was ultimately defeated because of advocacy efforts.
- ◆ Arizona - a bill was introduced (2016) that would permit Physician Assistants to operate diagnostic imaging equipment.
- ◆ Kansas - a bill was introduced that would exempt Advanced Practice Registered Nurses from any restriction on operating radiation equipment.
- ◆ The Arizona and Kansas bills were not successful, however the state societies expect them to be reintroduced in the future.
- ◆ OHIO - several years ago, an amendment was introduced to the licensure law that would allow Registered Cardiovascular Invasive Specialists to perform duties of a radiographer. The OSRT actively opposed this and ultimately it was defeated.

In 2019, changes were made to the Ohio radiologic licensing statute in the 2019 Budget Bill passed in July. During the discussion phase, many legislators were approached for support of an amendment that would put the Advanced Practice Registered Nurse as supervisors of Radiologic Technologists. Because of the OSRT's good relations with legislators and other organizations, this was not supported by the legislators and was not included in the final bill.

These are just a few of the issues that are cropping up in Ohio and around the country. Without the OSRT's efforts, changes could be enacted without our knowledge or input and little to no opposition. The OSRT employs a lobbyist and is working diligently to form alliances with other like-minded organizations, and to form relationships with legislators.

If you have ever asked the question "WHY SHOULD I JOIN THE OSRT? WHAT DOES THE OSRT DO FOR ME?" THIS IS THE ANSWER. Don't you want someone advocating for the Radiologic Technologist as laws and rules are written that affect us?!

That is the OSRT!



What current Advocacy issue are we watching?

There are two main bills the OSRT Advocacy committee is tracking in the Senate. Senate Bill 236, introduced by Senator Huffman, has the support and backing of the OSRT. Senate Bill 250, introduced by Senator Williams, is still being discussed by the OSRT Leadership. Below you will find a brief description of each bill.

The OSRT is also monitoring House Bill 492, which would allow physician assistants to perform fluoroscopy after completing the 40-hour didactic and 40-hour clinical training requirements contained in the Educational Framework for PAs Performing Fluoroscopy. This bill was introduced on February 5, 2020 and its progress will be tracked as it develops further.

Senate Bill 236 Summary:

- Requires that rules regarding Ohio's Radiation Control Program be adopted by considering the *Suggested State Regulations for Control of Radiation* and various federal regulations, rather than by using standards that are no less stringent than those sources.
- Specifies that one of the activities radiographers and nuclear medicine technologists are licensed to perform is to document orders for contrast and radiopharmaceuticals, respectively, in patient medical records.
- Requires a radiographer and a nuclear medicine technologist to practice in a manner that is consistent with a definitive set of treatment guidelines approved by the clinical leadership of the institution where the radiographer practices.
- Under current law, the Director of Health is required to adopt rules regarding licensure of facilities that handle radioactive material and registration of facilities that handle radiation-generating equipment. The director also must adopt rules identifying sources of radiation; its possession, use, disposal; and levels of radiation that constitute an unreasonable or unnecessary risk to health or the environment.

Senate Bill 250 Summary:

- Would allow physicians to operate radiation-generating equipment if that equipment "is not capable of generating energy at a level that exceeds 200kV".
- Would require the state medical board and director of health to formulate rules and regulations for
 - How much training and what certification would be required for physicians,
 - What types of equipment physicians would be allowed to operate,
 - What standards physicians would be expected to adhere to while operating radiation-generating equipment.

Next REC (Radiation-Generating Equipment Committee) Meeting is March 6, 2020

- 35 E. Chestnut Street, Basement Training Room A starting at 10:00 a.m.
- Plan to review any public comments to Radiologic License Chapter 3701-72 and Radiation Therapy Chapter 3701:1-67

National News

Did you know there are still six places in the United States that don't require a license? Requiring licenses helps protect our profession and stabilize our jobs.

The states and districts that don't currently have license requirements are: Alabama, District of Columbia, Georgia, Missouri, North Carolina, South Dakota.

Alabama and Georgia recently introduced bills that would require licenses for operators of radiation-generating equipment, and we wish them well in their quest for state license requirements.

How a bill becomes a law: a refresher

- A senator puts an idea into writing in the form of a bill. The bill is introduced.
- The bill is assigned to a committee for public debate and input. To advance the bill, the committee votes to report it.
- The bill is brought to the floor for a vote by all the members of the Senate.
- The bill moves to the Ohio House to undergo the same process. Both chambers must reconcile any changes into one bill.
- The bill is sent to the governor. If the governor approves of the bill, it will be allowed to become a law.

What can you do?

Send your comments! The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) will be putting the proposed rule changes out for public comment very soon. The OSRT will put notification of this posting on its website (www.osrt.org). The ODH comment format allows individuals to respond with comments directly to the ODH. If you would like to comment to the OSRT, or if you have questions please contact advocacy@osrt.org.

And as always, you can further support these efforts to safeguard our practice by joining the OSRT! The larger the membership the more the legislators and administrators listen to our concerns. Don't think your membership is irrelevant to these efforts - having a large population of members that supports the OSRT's positions is absolutely critical. Help Us Help You!

Follow us!

Be sure to follow the OSRT on social media!

