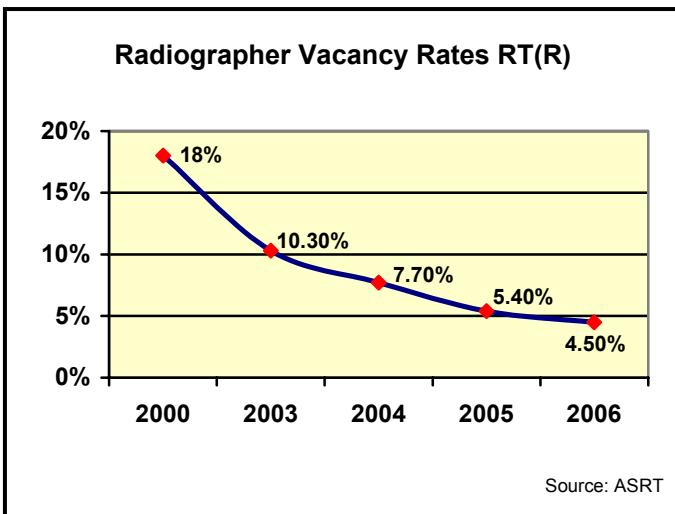


Is There Really an RT Shortage?

On the surface, it may appear that the RT shortage is finally over. In previous annual compensation reviews, **RadSciences Group** reported that the number of searches conducted for Radiographers decreased by more than 15 percent in 2003 and decreased by approximately 24 percent in 2004. According to a recent survey conducted by **RadSciences Group**, nearly two-thirds of the respondents believed the ease of recruiting Radiographers this year as compared to 2005 was "about the same" or "easier" because they are able to simply and quickly recruit RT's from local schools. When asked if they believed this trend would continue into 2007 and beyond, the vast majority of respondents confessed that they had no data to provide a proper response.

The *ASRT* recently reported technologist vacancy rates by modality for the first quarter of 2006 (Cardiovascular, Ultrasound, Nuclear Medicine, Radiography, MRI, CT and Mammography). As compared to 2005, all modalities experienced a drop in vacancy rate except for Ultrasound, which recorded no change. **RadSciences Group** continues to report elevated requests to recruit for more specialized positions such as Cardiovascular, Ultrasound, Vascular and Echocardiography.



Forecast

According to our research, the staffing levels for Rad Techs appear to be stable for now. However, there are various factors to support the concern that vacancy rates will increase in the near future resulting in a shortage of Radiographers. As imaging technology advances and the baby boomer population grows older, the use of imaging technology will increase. The *National Imaging Association* reports that after age 65, patient use of imaging technology triples. The growing population and

the increasing age of baby boomers will also increase the number of current Radiographers approaching retirement age.

Industry Projection Highlights

- Among the Medicare population, the number of annual imaging procedures performed will increase by 140% by 2020
- By 2030, U.S. population over 65 years of age doubles and population over 85 years of age triples
- By 2008, patient use of imaging procedures will likely grow to nearly half a billion outpatients and 100 million inpatient scans annually
- Between 2004 and 2014, employment of radiographers is projected to increase 18 to 26%

Source: National Imaging Association (NIA), American Society of Radiologic Technologists (ASRT), American Medical Association (AMA), Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)

Training Program Obstacles

According to a recent study performed by the *ASRT*, approximately 32,000 qualified applicants were turned down for enrollment in Radiology education programs last year. Most of the students that were initially turned away were eventually accepted into programs in other areas of the country, but there were still approximately 1,500 openings available nationwide. According to *ASRT* research, if the current enrollment trends continue, there will not be enough Radiographers to meet future demands projected by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The study also indicated that there are too few medical professionals to staff the RT training programs. The programs need more funding and equipment and programs had difficulty recruiting faculty and retaining students. The 2006 study produced the following data.

- 5.1% increase in first year students, but this statistic reflects a continuing slowdown from double-digit enrollment increases reported in 2002 and 2003
- 76.7% of Program Directors reported full enrollment in the fall of 2005
- Less than 20% of Program Directors said they have future plans to increase enrollment
- 67% of program directors said they had difficulty recruiting new faculty members, citing salary as the key hindrance

Is there really an RT shortage? Well, the skies look clear for now, but carry your umbrella just in case!