

# The Importance Of The Mobile Radiography Service From Home In The Time Of COVID-19 To Cancer Patients

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## Purpose

Demographic changes in the Western world linked to the increase in the elderly population, life expectancy and above all cancer patients and chronically ill patients, often entrusted to home care or in healthcare residences, highlight an exponential increase in requests for diagnostic tests at home.

Conventional radiographic examinations such as thoracic, musculoskeletal and abdominal images are the most requested and important first level diagnostic tests. To date and in particular in time of COVID-19 emergency, these patients need to be transferred to hospital or emergency room (ER) to perform radiological examinations, resulting in an increase in costs for the health system and an increased risk for the health of these already often debilitated and immunocompromised patients. We illustrate the advantages of performing conventional radiographic examinations directly at the cancer patient's home.

## Methods and Materials

We report our experience over the past six years through the establishment of a mobile home radiography service at our Cancer Institute. Home X-ray examinations are performed by qualified X-ray technicians equipped with PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) using a lightweight, portable, high-frequency X-ray tube, digital cassettes, and a mobile radiography station (Computed Radiography POC 260; Carestream Health, Rochester, New York) with remote viewing and real-time processing of captured images. The equipment is transported in a small, homologated van.

## Results

The main diagnostic tests required are chest radiographs for the onset of acute diseases such as infections, respiratory diseases, cardiovascular accidents, device checks or follow-up; Requests for abdominal and musculoskeletal radiographs followed. From our experience there are no significant differences in the quality of chest x-rays taken at home or in hospital. We found a reduction in hospitalization rates with better and timely home care associated with better patient compliance and a reduction in transport costs.

## Conclusion

The home mobile radiography service has numerous advantages both in terms of cost-benefits for the health system and in increasing the quality of life of frail patients by protecting their physical and psychological health.

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