

FOCUS ON CRA



CRA Preferred



By Gary L. Duehring, PhD, CRA, RT, FAHRA • Medical Imaging Administrator, Avant Imaging • Brighton, MI • kspacer1@aol.com

Recently, after having the opportunity to speak with several human resource directors, I found a new twist when looking for imaging directors.

I was able to read a number of job descriptions from the mid-west when I was approached by a number of health systems to see if I was interested in speaking to them about possible employment. What I found, in the section on education, competencies, and requirements for consideration, was the phrase, "CRA preferred."

Being a commissioner for the Radiology Administrators Certification Commission (RACC), I was thrilled. I could not help but to think how meaningful these credentials have become so quickly. Then again, it's not the credentials, but rather the caliber of persons who hold the credentials, that has made such a distinction in our profession. Now those health systems that do comparative market share research and study the economics of healthcare see the cost efficiency of individuals with demonstrated skills and competencies. They prefer interviewing experienced, credentialed professionals.

Just as imaging administrators seek credentialed staff (knowing that these individuals have established themselves as possessing certain qualities and skills, and, as a rule of thumb, do perform more effectively and efficiently), so have corporate officers discovered the value of credentialing. They prefer someone who can hit the ground running; an experienced leader.

Our CRA colleagues have proven themselves within their healthcare communities to be able to perform with a higher degree of efficiency and effectiveness, to the point where they

have drawn deserved recognition.

They are truly worthy of our recognition and thanks. As a profession, all CRAs benefit from the expertise demonstrated, the value received for the investment by healthcare facilities, and the quality of care directed to the patients under the leadership of CRAs.

Do credentials assure competencies? We all know the answer to this is no, not necessarily. But in today's economic market, any possible indicator that can help those burdened with the responsibility of decision making to formulate an educated choice, is *preferred*. I know that in Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, Tennessee, and California, I have seen this meaningful expression of trust and value: CRA preferred.

If you have the desire to demonstrate to your staff the value you place in credentials, or if you want to test your current capabilities and maybe gain some self edification, or if you want to improve your professional status and exposure within the healthcare medical imaging community, you must consider the value of taking the CRA exam and being *preferred*. Being designated as a credentialed professional, and being one who speaks so well of our profession, is in itself a rewarding sentiment, but now it also provides a sense of economic rewards.

If you are not a CRA, you can learn more about this opportunity at the AHRA Web site or by speaking with any CRA you might know (and if I know CRAs, I'm sure they have no problem speaking about these credentials).

I challenge you to demonstrate self confidence and pride in who you are as a professional. Demonstrate the ability to lead other professionals by example. Achieve the mark of distinction, a position of *preference*.

Just remember: CRA preferred. ■

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