

Dear ACR Member:

With rising health care costs and a drastic increase in imaging performed by nonradiologists, it seems that now more than ever, radiologists are under the microscope, defending our expertise to referring physicians, Congress, and private insurance companies. This is complicated by the fact that the public does not have a firm grasp of what we do and how our considerable education and training improve the quality of patient care.

For this reason, the ACR has launched a national branding campaign, titled “The Face of Radiology,” and is conducting extensive research to determine what people know and believe about radiologists’ expertise, training, and role in patient care. As a result, recent focus groups in Miami, Washington, D.C., and Burlington, Vt., reveal that many people:

- Do not consider radiologists doctors
- Do not know that radiologists must graduate from medical school
- Deem radiologists to be “passionless”
- Believe that a college education is not a requirement to be a radiologist

An important campaign goal is to establish widespread visibility for all radiologists. And to generate mass appeal, the College is integrating traditional marketing techniques with emerging ones, such as social media outlets YouTube and Facebook. Most importantly, we are preparing the following tools for the benefit of all radiologists:

- A DVD titled, “My Radiologist,” which explains the education, training, and role of radiologists
- The “My Radiologist” patient education brochure
- PowerPoint presentations for your use in presenting at local functions
- Campaign advertisements (that you are free to customize)
- Tools and visuals for use in your office waiting room

The campaign is truly a collaborative effort. We cannot disseminate these messages without everyone’s help. Please play the DVD in your waiting room, display the materials in high-traffic areas, and use the advertisements in local media to connect with your communities. And, if each practicing radiologist speaks with just five patients per day, we will reach more than 34 million patients in the next 12 months.

The increased understanding of who we are, what we do, and why that is so vitally important to the health care of Americans would not only help ACR advocate on our behalf at the federal and state levels but would also benefit our relationships with hospital administrators, state medical boards, and third-party payers.

Please join us in this effort to bring radiology out of the darkroom and into the forefront of patient understanding. Our collaborative effort will not only serve to benefit all of our practices but will also help advance radiology's future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James H. Thrall M.D." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

James H. Thrall, M.D., FACR
Vice Chair, Board of Chancellors
American College of Radiology