

Southern Radiology launches a dedicated Digital Mammography site

Southern Radiology in Bondi Junction has brought the convenience and image quality of premier CR systems from Carestream Health to its mammography department. By adding the optional KODAK DIRECTVIEW CR Mammography Feature to the versatile KODAK DIRECTVIEW CR 850 System, Southern Radiology became the first dedicated digital mammography site in Sydney's eastern suburbs.

The busy referral centre moved premises to aid the transition to a fully digital service, and boasts a 64-slice CT scanner, two ultrasound machines, a KODAK DIRECTVIEW CR 975 System for general radiography as well as the KODAK DIRECTVIEW CR 850 System—upgraded upon installation to include the CR Mammography Feature.

Radiographer and Southern Radiology Business Manager, Don Kelly, says digital mammography was the last part of the digital jigsaw. "We really wanted to lead in using digital mammography rather than just waiting for it to become an industry standard," he said. "We have a very good reputation among our local women's health GPs. We really wanted to go out and show them the image quality that we could offer them (through using digital mammography)."

Improved image quality a potential lifesaver



According to Southern Radiology Administration Partner and Radiologist, Dr. Andy Garfagnini, the image quality afforded by KODAK DIRECTVIEW CR Systems is excellent. He cites two recent cases where serious breast abnormalities, previously unseen with conventional mammography, were detected using KODAK DIRECTVIEW CR technology.

"In one case, we detected a suspicious-looking microcalcification. During a subsequent biopsy, conventional film-screen mammography failed to locate the breast lesion. The surgeon had to perform a stereotactic biopsy using a digital mammography unit instead. The microcalcification turned out to be malignant," said Dr. Garfagnini.

Mandy Shnier, Chief Radiographer/Mammographer at Bondi Junction, describes the image contrast provided by Carestream Health's digital mammography as "exceptional", especially with the image enhancement provided by the KODAK DIRECTVIEW EVP Software. "I have not repeated a single mammogram due to poor exposure. The images also have a really good consistency due to the latitude of CR."



Southern Radiology in Bondi Junction has joined an elite group of diagnostic imaging centres around Australia making the transition to digital mammography with KODAK DIRECTVIEW CR Systems from Carestream Health.

Increased workflow efficiency a time-saver for all

The Bondi Junction team reports that faster image acquisition, fewer exam repeats and ease of soft-copy reporting have improved efficiency at the busy private practice. According to Dr. Garfagnini, Carestream Health's digital mammography is faster for the patient, the technician and the radiologist than film-screen mammography.

"The technicians are able to view images much more quickly. Therefore, the time it takes to check the technical quality of the mammogram is reduced, making the exam shorter for the patient. Reporting is also a lot easier and quicker, partly because we can zoom in on areas of interest or suspicion without the inconvenience of having to take further images," explains Dr. Garfagnini.

Magnification views can often be avoided as the ability to post-process and manipulate an image once an exam is complete facilitates any requirement for further magnification, says Ms. Shnier. Post-processing can also correct for under or overexposure, eliminating the need for some women to undergo repeat exams.

Carestream Health team delivers a seamless installation

Ms. Shnier describes the transition to KODAK DIRECTVIEW CR digital mammography as very easy. "Carestream Health had a team of staff dedicated to us, which made for a very smooth installation," she said. Dr. Garfagnini agrees. "We have an excellent working relationship with Carestream Health. We really are delighted with the whole outcome."

Feedback from referring doctors has also been very positive and is likely to have increased the practice's



Carestream Health's customised training and support included the set-up of individual display protocols for each radiologist, e.g. "stacked fashion" viewing versus total image display.

mammography workload, says Ms. Shnier. "Our referrers are increasingly digitized," explains Mr. Kelly. "As we move further away from film, we need to be able to give referrers a choice when it comes to what medium they want to receive their images in."

According to Mr. Kelly, the practice aims to start sending images electronically to referrers in the near future. "The ability to send breast images in a JPEG- or DICOM-compatible format is just incredible," he said.

A pioneering role for Southern Radiology

Committed to being at the forefront of digital technology, Southern Radiology is happy to pioneer the use of Carestream Health's digital mammography technology in Australia, says Mr. Kelly. "We all share the same vision—to be different from the competition. We want to lead in using this state-of-the-art technology."

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