

## Breast Ultrasounds-NSCMIRTP Position Statement

9 November 2021

The College recognizes that breast ultrasounds are an important tool in detecting breast abnormalities. A breast ultrasound may be used in conjunction with a screening mammogram or as a stand-alone exam to assess observed changes in breast health.

The College is committed to ensuring the safety of patients and health care providers during breast ultrasound appointments.

The application of ultrasound falls within the scope of practice of Diagnostic Medical Sonography. The College understands that in some regions of Nova Scotia, the practice is for Radiological Technologists, working in mammography departments, to perform a breast ultrasound due to mammogram findings or as a preliminary exam for observed changes in breast tissue. From the College's perspective, this constitutes the practice of Diagnostic Medical Sonography. However, based on its conversations with other MRT regulators in Canada, the College understands that this is a fairly common practice across the country.

To prevent significant service delivery and access disruptions, which would be contrary to the public interest, the College takes the position that Radiological Technologists may perform radiologist supervised breast ultrasound if all the following conditions are met by the Radiological Technologist:

- they have obtained certification from Sonography Canada, or the American Registry of Diagnostic Sonographers, or the Medical Technology Management Institute, or an equivalent in breast ultrasound;
- they have undergone additional on-the-job training to gain necessary experience;
- they have the knowledge, skills, and judgement to perform the procedure;
- they follow the Canadian Association of Radiologists' (CAR) Practice Guidelines and Technical Standards for Breast Imaging and Intervention;
- they engage in applicable continuing competency education; and
- breast ultrasounds do not constitute the majority (more than 50%) of their practice.

The CAR Breast Imaging Guidelines and standards as of June 1, 2021 are available at the following site: <https://car.ca/book/breast-imaging-guidelines/>.

Radiologist supervised is defined as a radiologist being present and available in the department while the breast ultrasound is being performed. Radiological Technologists who perform breast ultrasounds are not authorized to use the protected title of Diagnostic Medical Sonographer (DMS), hold themselves out as a DMS, nor may they list sonography as one of their specialties of practice.