

## POSITION STATEMENT OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANTS

Technical assistants (TAs) have been employed in diagnostic imaging departments for many years. As with all positions in healthcare, the role of TAs varies by department and have changed with technical advances. TAs in a diagnostic imaging department can be a positive member of the imaging team and contribute to improved patient care and departmental efficiency by supporting patient flow through the department.

Medical Imaging and radiation therapy (MIRT) professionals working alongside TAs in the clinical department have a responsibility to understand the MIRT's scope of practice and the tasks that TAs are expected and can perform in the department.

A broad job description for a TA is to assist all staff members with patient care activities and daily operation of department and maintain patient flow. A wide variety of tasks can be included under this description including but not limited to;

- Assisting in patient transfers
- Completing tracking paperwork on patient
- Getting patients changed and ready for exams
- Arranging inpatient transfers for exams
- Phoning for requested lab reports (i.e creatinine, BUN levels)
- Placing IVs (when proper training has been received)
- Stock supplies

MIRT's responsibility for their patients when working with a TA remains the same as when working with any other healthcare provider. If an MIRT is performing a procedure on an individual, they must ensure proper consent is obtained prior to beginning the procedure. TAs cannot obtain informed consent for a diagnostic imaging or therapeutic procedure as they do not have the request knowledge base to be able to fully explain a procedure and to answer questions patients may have about the procedures. TAs may hand out information and registration forms to patients that patients are expected to fill out and sign. These forms do not negate the MIRT's responsibility to ensure they have attained proper informed or written consent for all procedures. If an MIRT initials or signs any paperwork stating consent was given, they need to have gathered that consent themselves or witnessed that it was attained and who attained it.

TAs do not report to MIRTs in a clinical setting, they work alongside them as part of the team. TAs report to team leads or managers. MIRTs carry the same responsibilities when working with TAs as they do when working with other healthcare professionals. MIRTs are expected to step in and advocate for their patients if they witness unsafe practices by any healthcare provider including TAs. MIRTs cannot be held accountable for actions of a TA, or any other healthcare provider, if they did not direct those actions and were not present or aware of actions and able to prevent them.