

In France, in a recent past, about twenty regions (among 99) were included in campaign for breast cancer screening. About 1 100 mammography facilities were concerned and submitted to quality control (QC) protocol. The QC protocol stems from 1992 and 1996 European Community recommendations and, in France, from the working Interdisciplinary Mammography Task Group. Now, since the regulation issued on 2001, sept.27th, the other regions are included in the campaign. The dec. 5th, 2001, a regulation was issued to edict the mandatory QC of medical devices.

As part of this program, the different QC tests concerned the mammography equipment, the development system, the image receptor and the environment of lecture. Nature and frequency of the QC tests are defined by the July 1998 protocol, written by the technical team of the national cell of the experimental campaign.

In the French Riviera region, a four years QC campaign (1998 - 2001) was achieved and follows a first 1994 -1996 QC campaign, concerning initially 78 mammography facilities.

The results of 1996 and, then, the 1998, 1999 and 2001 results, showed a real improvement of the global quality of the mammography equipment, an important skin dose level decrease and also rejuvenation and a significant conformity of the pool. Actually, on the whole mammography pool, if the surface skin dose of 6.6 mGy has not moved between 1998 and 1999, the image score with a MTM100 phantom has increased : 28 points in 1998 to 40 points in 1999. These good results proceeds from the old mammography equipment readjustment and from the 24.6 % new mammography equipment acquisition.

Application of the July 1998 criteria QC protocol and the criteria resulting from the national health department decisions, in Aug.1999, have introduced seven absolute conformity criteria. In the screening campaign, about ten percent of equipment has been declared out of accordance.

The 1998, July the 1st regulation on health safety and the recent regulation 2001, Dec the 5th, will extend QC to the whole pool of mammography equipment (2500 in France), which will put an end of a paradoxical situation, where only the voluntary installations, implied in the screening campaign, could be controlled and possibly penalized.