

## AbstractID: 1875 Title: Implementation and Management of a Junior Physicist Program in a Large-Scale Multi-Center Network

In recent years, market demand for experienced therapeutic radiological physicists has consistently exceeded the supply. As a consequence of this demand, mainstream radiotherapy facilities seeking to fill staff physicist vacancies are often faced with selecting a candidate from a pool of individuals with limited experience or entering into a bidding war with competitors for skilled physicists. In response to this dilemma, an initiative has been undertaken to identify, hire, and develop junior-level physicists within a large network of cancer centers. This solution provides a clinic with immediate assistance for the staff physicist, helps to contain operating costs when compared to hiring a highly experienced physicist, and provides the new physicist with a balanced and broad clinical experience. A model was constructed to help individual clinics and potential mentor physicists identify core training elements and guidelines to measure progress. Candidates are stratified into one of three groups based upon their formal training and clinical experience. These candidates are then matched to a practice with an experienced physicist capable of mentoring this person. To date, eight sites in this network have hired a junior physicist with a commitment to actively develop their clinical training. Periodic reports by the mentor and junior staff member to a physicist committee within the network as well as annual mock-oral exams, constitute, in part, several tools used to measure the progress of the junior physicist over a two year clinical mentorship. Ultimately, adequate preparation for independent clinical practice will be measured by achieving board certification.