Northampton Community College
Radiography Program

"Essential Functions" of a Radiographer

The following is a list of the everyday functions that a radiographer needs to be able to perform at the hospitals or outpatient facilities.

Please read the essential functions and decide if you are able to perform them. If you cannot, you may want to re-consider radiography as a career choice for you.

After acceptance into the Radiography Program, if you have a documented disability, we will make every effort to provide ***reasonable accommodations*** for you. If reasonable accommodations cannot be made and/or the ***patient would be placed at risk***, your acceptance to the Radiography Program would have to be rescinded.

1. Observational skills:

Examples:

- Assess the patient's needs.
- Able to discern the information that is needed for the procedure at hand.
- Recognize the need for prompt medical attention in a variety of settings and locations.
- Discern the details, density, and contrast of a radiographic image in order to determine if it is optimal for the radiologist's interpretation.
- Distinguish among the chromatic colors.
- Be able to use peripheral vision.
- Judge the distance of objects and the spatial relationship of objects at different distances.
- Detect changes in equipment operation (i.e., overheating, incorrect meter readings).
- Secure the correct chemical container and/or medication.

2. Communication skills:

Examples:

- Communicate with other health care providers.
- Perceive the patient's oral communication with the ear
- Be able to hear sounds of a high pitch (e.g., patient's monitoring equipment).
- Be able to hear sounds of a low pitch (e.g., patient's breathing patterns).
- Perceive the patient's nonverbal communication.
- Secure information (i.e., questioning of the patient).
- Communicate promptly and effectively in English both verbally and in writing.
- Communicate with the patient and the public on a level that they are able to comprehend.
- Communicate effectively, using medical terminology, with the physician and other health personnel.
- Respond to directives from others related to patient care and emergency situations.
- Display compassion, empathy, integrity, concern for others, interest, and motivation.
- Obtain pertinent information from the patient's chart.
- Obtain information that is requested by the physician in order to make a diagnosis.
- Document in writing, through knowledge of the medical terms, good grammar, and spelling, information needed on the patient's requisition for an optimum diagnosis by the radiologist.
- Document the vital sign findings for the use of other health care personnel.
- Interact with others in a respectful, professional manner especially in stressful situations.

3. Motor skills:

Examples:

- Tolerate physically taxing workloads.
- Safely lift from a lower to a higher position a minimum of 50 pounds and occasionally as much as 75 pounds.
- Be able to carry an object weighing as much as 25 pounds in order to transport it from one place to another.
- Be able to draw, drag, haul, or tug an object(s) weighing more than 100 pounds or the patient's weight.
- Be able to push an object(s) with steady force in order to thrust forward, downward, or outward weighing more than 100 pounds or the patient's weight.
- Be able to stoop/bend, squat, crouch, kneel, crawl, climb, and reach above shoulder level.
- Sufficient gross and fine motor coordination to respond promptly, manipulate equipment, and ensure patient safety.
- Perceive the attributes of an object(s) such as size, shape, temperature, or texture by touching with the skin, particularly that of the fingertips.
- Elicit information from a patient by diagnostic maneuvers (i.e., palpation).
- Safely manipulate and use controls (i.e., the x- ray tube that is located up to six feet from the radiographic/fluoroscopic room floor).
- Be able to use the fingers/hands in repetitive actions such as picking, pinching, writing, firm grasping, and twisting/turning.
- Skillfully use precision instruments.
- Maintain an upright, erect position with the entire body supported by the feet for as long as 7 hours during the work day.
- Function efficiently while wearing lead protective apparel.
- Safely perform procedures.
- Utilize the equipment needed to obtain temperature, pulse, respiration, and blood pressure.
- Enter data into the computer.

4. Cognitive functions:

Examples:

- Ability to adapt to a crisis situation, flexible schedules, and/or change in environment.
- Function effectively under stressful conditions.
- Concentrate on the task at hand.
- Visually concentrate and/or focus thoughts or efforts for long periods of time.
- Exercise independent judgment and discretion in the safe technical performance of medical imaging procedures.