

Remote readers, a new group of nuclear cardiologists, use Syntermed Live™ to improve diagnostic value of nuclear heart images

Atlanta, GA (PRWeb) September 10, 2008 – Nuclear cardiologists gather this weekend at the annual meeting of the American Society of Nuclear Cardiologists (ASNC) in Boston, MA, to identify new and innovation techniques for analyzing heart imaging studies. Syntermed, Inc., an Atlanta-based nuclear medicine imaging and informatics software company is introducing several new cardiac imaging software products to expand the diagnostic capabilities of the nuclear cardiologist. The dominance of heart disease, with nearly 5 million people in the U.S. experiencing heart failure alone, has spurred new science to better diagnose the complexities of the heart and provide cardiologists the most up-to-date technology to view and analyze cardiac images.

According to Kenneth Van Train, president of Syntermed, “An increasing number of cardiologists want to view the images of the heart themselves to visually see the extent and severity of infarcts or ischemia.” Nuclear cardiologists are utilizing the Syntermed Live™ system to easily access secure, high-resolution heart images and diagnostic information. The trend towards virtual access and remote reading is more than a convenience for nuclear cardiologists. They can now retrieve archived files for comparison studies and communicate quickly with colleagues. The speed and turn around time has incrementally improved the overall workload at imaging centers using the Syntermed Live system.

One proponent of the system is Robert Matthews, MD, a nuclear cardiologist based in Stony Brook, New York, who reads and interprets studies from the California Vascular Imaging Center based in Anaheim, California. “The quality of cardiac imaging from the Syntermed Live system is excellent,” says Dr. Matthews. “I have control over the type of computer and monitor I use for viewing the study.” Dr. Matthews’ New York office has a PC, and for remote viewing he prefers a laptop that allows him to read studies anywhere

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there is an internet connection. “The quality control grid inherent in the system tests the resolution of the monitors you are using. The Syntermed system also ensures the security of the patients’ files.”

Syntermed Live™ reduces the downtime of the camera equipment, enabling technicians to quickly download the data to a secondary or remote reading PC/MAC at any given time. If the physician is offsite, the system provides web-based access for convenient remote access reading. This option provides ample capability to make an interpretation, including rotating raw data for quality control, un-gated and gated slices, polar maps, and analyzing the ejection fraction as well as reading final reports. Case in point, “While attending a recent medical meeting in New Orleans, I had a stat study for a patient scheduled for an urgent pre-operative evaluation. In between lectures, I was able to log onto the server, view the study, and send out the final report in a matter of minutes,” said Dr. Matthews. “I have never lost connection to the main Syntermed Live server to download files. The speed of downloading files is really limited by the speed of your own computer viewing the study rather than the server.”

The Syntermed Toolbox Viewer™ is easy to use and allows the reading cardiologist the capability of adjusting the images after the technologists has processed the images. It works seamlessly with Syntermed’s Emory Cardiac Toolbox™, and is easily adaptable to other software packages.

Having archived studies is important to Dr. Matthews. “I like that the studies are always stored with the final report, so I do not have to ask the technologist (in California) where to find an old study disk and upload it on the computer,” adds Dr. Matthews. “Since the Emory Cardiac Toolbox is automatically updated, having the newest version makes reading cardiac studies easier and provides a better report. The reports are easily connected to the images so the referring physicians can just download them and print.” All of these features contribute to a more streamlined approach to handling sensitive medical information.

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New Practice Management Trend: Balancing work and family

For some cardiologists, the Syntermed Live system supports a quality of life issue. Phil Hemstreet, MD, a nuclear cardiologist in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, balances work and family life using the Syntermed Live system. Cardiology Consultants is a busy interventional cardiology practice and sees an average of 20 patients a day. Currently, Dr. Hemstreet is the only trained nuclear cardiologist. At home he has a wife and six children all anxious to see him too.

“It really was the best product we could find in terms of maintaining quality of images and work that we needed to become an ICANL-certified imaging center, while allowing us to maintain the workflow we had established,” says Dr. Hemstreet. This system also improved the workstation traffic jam. Quality of images and sufficient data retrieval was a paramount issue when considering the Syntermed Live system. Now Dr. Hemstreet concentrates on patient care in the office, and at night when he is at home, he can pull up studies remotely and complete the readings. “The need to be at home in body and spirit is a pressing concern for my family,” says Dr. Hemstreet. “It (Syntermed Live) basically has added two hours of quality home time to my day as opposed to being tied to the office. For our patients, we’re able to have same-day turnaround on weekday reports and two-day turnaround over the weekend.”

Syntermed president Kenneth Van Train is pleased with the response from nuclear cardiologists. “The Syntermed Live system is designed for maximum output,” said Van Train. “Once a nuclear study is processed and uploaded, the study is ready to be interpreted by the reading physician. He or she can access the data in office or offsite with Internet access on a PC/MAC without interrupting the technicians at the workstations. More and more we are a virtual culture, needing quicker, faster access to more complex data. With heart disease, there is always an urgency; the Syntermed Live system has enabled cardiologists to access vital information quickly while enhancing the quality of the heart images.”

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For more information about Syntermed Live contact Ken VanTrain, President, Syntermed, Inc., ph: 888-263-4446 x 102, email info@syntermed.com, or consult the company's website at www.syntermed.com.

Dr. Roberts Matthews is also the Assistant Professor of Radiology, Stony Brook University Medical Center, Stony Brook, NY. He reads images for the California Vascular Imaging Center, 1801 Romneya Dr., Suite #105, Anaheim, CA 92801; email cviimaging@yahoo.com.

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Photo attached: (caption)

Syntermed Live software enables Robert Matthews, MD, nuclear cardiologist in NY, to read remotely and interpret cardiac image studies for California Vascular Imaging, located in Anaheim, CA.