



Oncology Departments Generate High-Quality Film Images for Referring Physicians With KODAK Medical Imager.

Oncology departments are turning to a new type of medical imager to generate cost-effective, high-quality images. The KODAK 3600 Desktop Medical Imager equips departments to print both grayscale and color images onto specialized KODAK Desktop Medical Imaging Film and Paper.

MONMOUTH MEDICAL CENTER

Monmouth Medical Center in Long Branch, New Jersey, is a perfect example. The center's oncology department handles up to 100 patients a day and employs the latest equipment, including a Siemens BeamView NT portal imaging system, a Siemens ImageRT electronic database and an ADAC Pinnacle Treatment Plan system.

Previously, images were either printed on networked color printers or the CT (computed tomography) system's dedicated printer. However, the department wanted an alternative printing method because the color printers could only print to paper and the dedicated printer was very expensive to operate.

"We wanted an affordable device that offered excellent image quality and the ability to print to medical film, which is the preferred format for our referring physicians," notes Hansen Chen, M.S., a medical physicist at Monmouth's Department of Radiology Oncology.

The Kodak 3600 imager is linked to Monmouth's treatment planning system and its portal imaging system via a local area network that also supports other medical devices.

The imaging system provides accurate target localization throughout the oncology treatment course. Portal images that verify a patient's setup and positioning are printed on the Kodak 3600 imager. Digitally reconstructed radiography (DRR) images from the treatment planning system are output to the imager as well. These images contain an overlay of the treatment field and color display of the tumor contours.

"The Kodak 3600 Desktop Medical Imager is an excellent imaging solution for oncology applications because it produces high-quality referral images on medical film, which are durable and ideal for physicians who want to conduct image comparisons throughout the course of oncology treatment," Chen says.

Images can be generated on either 8 x 10-inch or 11 x 14-inch Kodak medical imaging film. These images become an integral part of a patient's file and are used for future reference and legal purposes. The Kodak 3600 imager includes proprietary Kodak image processing software that enhances edge definition and brings out subtle shades of color or gray. It produces up to 1200 x 1200 dots-per-inch (dpi) color and grayscale images.

"The image quality from the Kodak 3600 imager is excellent. It's much better in terms of diagnostic content than our color printer, and it's almost as good as the modality printer at a fraction of the price," explains Chen. "We continue to print images for primary diagnostic use on our modality printer, but we use the Kodak 3600 imager for referral and test images."

Chen says the combination of high-quality images with low-cost film imaging is important for oncology applications. "Physicians want a film record of the treatment for the patient's file. Being able to provide high-quality images is an excellent service for our referring physicians."



Hansen Chen, M.S.

Health Imaging Division
EASTMAN KODAK COMPANY
Rochester, NY 14650

KODAK CANADA INC.
Toronto, Ontario M6M 1V3
CANADA

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contact your local Kodak company.

www.kodak.com/go/health

Front cover: Monmouth Medical Center in Long Branch, N.J. recently installed a Kodak 3600 Desktop Medical Imager.

