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The Good Ol' Days?

Erin Simon Schwartz, MD

Another academic year has begun and, I have to be honest, I worry about those transitioning from training to practice. At the risk of offending Doug Phillips (Isn't mimicry the highest form of flattery?¹), we want them to be "doing that good work"—but are we setting them up for success?

Back when I was a resident (the worst stories always start like that), around the time Roentgen was retiring, there was no such thing as an attending radiologist in house overnight. While perhaps less than ideal, one thing we were unequivocally forced to learn is how to "make the call." Writing down those impressions and moving to the next case, knowing that an attending radiologist would not review those images for 6-12 hours and that the care team would act on our interpretation, was terrifying and nearly impossible.

Now pressures are even more immense for rapid radiology interpretations, and images per study have increased exponentially. Many centers have an attending radiologist actively working with and overseeing trainees 24/7/365, albeit sometimes virtually. This means, for many trainees, their first opportunity to be the sole arbiter of image interpretation comes during their first days in their first "real job."

This massive professional stressor also often coincides with many life stressors — relocation, home purchase, relationship changes, caregiving responsibilities, and so forth — it's a recipe for overwhelm.

What's the solution? I wish I knew.

The old way taught me a great deal. Although it was likely suboptimal for the patients on evenings I worked alone, in the long run did it better equip me for the demands of a radiology career? Maybe.

Or maybe demands on radiology have increased such that even the most experienced and capable (including folks far faster and more knowledgeable than I am) feel overwhelmed. So how can we expect those coming out of training to survive, let alone, thrive?

I don't have a good answer. But know that if you are a junior or even a newly minted attending, you are not alone. Reach out to your colleagues and mentors when you have questions. Take time to support your own wellness. And know that it will get better.

Transitions

At *Applied Radiology (AR)*, we are delighted to welcome a new leader to our editorial team! **Sharon Breske** is certainly not new to the Anderson Publishing family as she has been the outstanding managing editor of our sibling publication, *Applied Radiation Oncology (ARO)*, for many years. Sharon is now the editorial director of *AR* as well as *ARO*, and I am thrilled to have the opportunity to work more closely with her. She brings a wealth of expertise to *AR*, and we appreciate having her on our team now, too.

¹Actually, the original quote from Oscar Wilde is "Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery that mediocrity can pay to greatness." Read into that what you will. And thank you for reading all the way to the footnote.