The Neurodiagnostic field is rapidly growing. Technologists are enhancing services, performing new services such as: Intraoperative Monitoring, 24/7 Epilepsy monitoring, and long term ICU monitoring which in turn is creating a need for more technologists.

Growth of the field along with the increasing age of the current allied health workforce (many looking towards retirement within the next few years) makes it apparent that we have an immediate need to increase the number of trained and qualified technologists.

A recent article in the ACNS newsletter shared that based on the “ASET 2015 Salary and Benefits Report, the top trends in the neurodiagnostic profession are the expansion of services and hiring of more staff.” In addition the Bureau of Labor and Statistics projects a 14% or greater increase in Health Care Technology jobs, which includes the field of Neurodiagnostics.

Currently there are only 22 CAAHEP accredited Neurodiagnostic Technology programs nationwide. These programs are not graduating nearly enough students to fill the need for qualified technologists. When asked, programs shared the number one issue that keeps Neurodiagnostic programs from expanding is the limitation of clinical sites for students to perform their clinical practicum experiences.

What is the solution to this shortage of technologists? What can YOU do to help grow your workforce and help train the technologists of the future?

Neurodiagnostic Technology Programs and the profession need the support of labs and technologists nationwide. Consider partnering with your local NDT program. If there is not one in your area, look at partnering with one of the distance education programs. These programs need YOU and your staff in order to help fill the open positions for trained and credentialed technologists.

The Neurodiagnostic community needs to work together and support those interested in entering this exciting field—they are our future.

We hope that you find this brochure informational. It was put together by a group of technologists who have had long standing roles in Neurodiagnostic education. It is our hope that this information will inspire you to step up and have an impact on the future of the Neurodiagnostic profession by helping shape the minds of those eager and excited to enter the field of Neurodiagnostics.
For accreditation purposes, the CoA-NDT requires there to be an appropriately credentialed technologist who is designated as a liaison to the program and who is responsible for the student while in the laboratory. This person assigns their work, evaluates their progress and works with the program to aid the student in meeting the programs goals. Not all staff members must be credentialed, but those supervising and evaluating students in the EEG lab need to hold an R. EEG T.

From the CoA-NDT Standards and Guidelines

Faculty and Clinical Instructional Staff

1. Responsibilities
   In classrooms, laboratories, and all clinical facilities where a student is assigned, there must be a qualified individual(s) clearly designated as a liaison(s) to the program to provide instruction, supervision, and timely assessments of the student’s progress in meeting program requirements.

2. Qualifications
   Instructors must be appropriately credentialed, knowledgeable in subject matter by virtue of training and experience, and effective in teaching assigned subjects.

BENEFITS OF BECOMING A CLINICAL SITE

Students can be potential new employees someday. Working with students enables you to create an applicant pool for existing and future job openings.

Additional benefits of becoming a clinical site:
- Students can help reduce staff’s workload by assisting with the daily tasks, paperwork and providing extra assistance needed for patient care. In addition, as the student’s skills improve, staff technologists observe and supervise and their actual procedural time is decreased.
- When patients are informed that your facility is a “clinical teaching site”, they are typically impressed and are eager to provide a learning opportunity for the student.
- When teaching, both students and staff learn. Students often motivate staff and provide incentive for them to sharpen their skills, review information previously learned and keep up with the new techniques and advancements in the field. For practicing technologists, continuing education is essential.
- When students attend more than one clinical affiliate site, it is not uncommon for there to be an exchange of new techniques and supplies shared among clinical facilities.

Clinical instructors (including the liaison) do not need to be graduates of a formal educational program. The role of the clinical instructor is to provide hands-on skills that can’t be duplicated in a school’s practice lab. Clinical instructors are not expected to give lectures to students but should be knowledgeable in the subject matter.

Typical clinical instructor duties include verifying skills and applied knowledge in:
- electrode placement and impedance,
- patient interaction and rapport
- history taking
- operation of the EEG instrument
- activation procedures
- laboratory and infection control procedures
- identifying artifacts and abnormalities in the recording, etc.

Beyond what is required by the CoA-NDT, each school may have additional requirements for its’ clinical instructors. While lab accreditation is a valuable goal, it is not required in order to be a clinical instructional site. It is helpful to have a good variety of patients and a high enough patient volume to assure good clinical exposure.
“We need to do our part in the development of a strong and qualified Neurodiagnostic workforce for the future! I remember my own personal experience as a student and how much I admired my instructors and mentors who influenced me to be the technologist that I am today. I want my students to feel the same way today. This is my way to give back to my profession. As a clinical site, we have the opportunity to build relationships with our students and to attract the top graduates to join our team as employment opportunities arise. Recruitment efforts are streamlined by having a qualified candidate right at your fingertips!”

Susan Agostini, R. EEG/EP T., CLTM, FASET
Clinical Instructor

“...the clinical rotation in particular helped me tremendously with hands-on tests on real clinical patients, and all first-hand encounters with real-world challenges and difficulties. The knowledge on performing tests learned in classroom has been greatly enhanced by real clinical tests, particularly those difficult ones. Only in clinical rotation environment had I improved my techniques, skills, not only on tests but also learned to interact with all kinds of patients and situations. Looking back, practical EEG test skills and professionalism would’ve been far from sufficient if I had not been going through a comprehensive clinical rotation. I am so glad that I had enrolled in a program that emphasized clinical practice and I believe all these led to high preparedness of me to land my first job upon graduation and first day on the job.”

Meiying Quan, R. EEG T.
Former Student

TESTIMONIALS
TAKE THE NEXT STEP

RESOURCES FOR CLINICAL SITES:

ASET Publications: Clinical Site Handbook 2nd Ed. w/CD

Education Strategies for Clinical Instructors:
http://www.regis.edu/~media/Files/RHCHP/Schools/PT/Clinical-Ed/ClinEd-Strategies.ashx

Clinical Instructor Academy:
https://www.youtube.com/user/asrtvideo

Allied Health Education Needs (CA):

To enroll in ASET’s national clinical site database, click here. For more information please go to www.aset.org or contact the ASET Director of Education, Faye Mc Nall at 816.931.1120 ext. 108, faye@aset.org.

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