



Study Shows Interpretation Errors and Communication Failures Lead to Most Radiology Claims

Interpretation errors and communication failures are two of the largest issues that lead to medical professional liability (MPL) claims in radiology, according to new research published in *Diagnosis*.

The authors reviewed data from more than 1,300 medical liability claims where radiology was the primary service provider, looking for information on what most often leads to patient harm. The data came from a national database of nearly 400,000 claims.

Almost 60% of the medical liability claims where radiology was the primary service provider were related to "an allegation of diagnostic failure." Forty-eight percent of these claims included a misinterpretation that delayed patient care.

The authors noted that continued education and peer review are two immediate ways to make an impact in this area. And in some cases, non-radiologists are actually interpreting studies instead of a radiologist, suggesting that non-radiologists should not go unchecked when they make initial interpretations.

Meanwhile, 23 percent of the claims involved a communication problem, whether it was communication between the radiologist and the ordering provider or communication to the patient. Improvement in this area may be achieved by implementing clear and well-communicated processes defining the methods and accountability for information transfer between radiologists, clinicians and patients.

(Source: [Radiology Business](#), September 21, 2017)