



Teleradiology Charter

French College of Radiology, presided by the French Radiological Society (Société Française de Radiologie, SFR), supports and contributes, at the national and regional level, to the development of teleradiology, which is a medical organization of radiological patient management and care. This organization is thoroughly described in the National Guidelines of the French Radiological Society (Guide du Bon Usage de la Téléradiologie, www.sfrnet.org) and validated by the French National Council of Physicians (Conseil National de l'Ordre des Médecins, CNOM). Teleradiology is part of the development of telemedicine, a major constituent of healthcare organization.

This charter summarizes the main principles of teleradiology.

1. Teleradiology should be controlled and organized by radiologist physicians, in collaboration with other physicians and healthcare professionals involved in patients' care; Teleradiology is part of the medical local organization of radiology at the applicant site.
2. Teleradiology is a medical act subject to professional ethics. It includes both telediagnosis and teleexpertise. Remote image transmission for technical purpose or remote teleinterpretation are only individual steps of teleradiology.
3. Teleradiology must not undermine the human relationship between the patient, the clinician, the radiographer and the radiologist. Teleradiology must take into account all technical and managerial requirements for optimal healthcare.
4. The use of teleradiology must comply with the general healthcare organization, in the patient's best interests:
 - Teleradiology must enable the patient's physician to offer high-quality radiological medicine via a teleradiologist
 - Teleradiology should promote exchanges of knowledge and know-how among the radiologists who use this modality ("teleexpertise")
 - Teleradiology must not be used to justify the acquisition or renewal of imaging facilities unless the necessary radiologists are available on site to operate them, in accordance with the medical project
5. The development of teleradiology in France is based on:
 - District and regional development of telediagnosis, promoting networking among clinicians and radiologists
 - The search for the best possible human radiological expertise, beyond that locally available, for teleexpertise
6. The French Radiological Society is committed to refining its national guidelines, together with the French National Authority for Health (Haute Autorité de Santé, HAS), concerned Medical Societies, the National Council of the College of Physicians (Conseil National de l'Ordre des Médecins, CNOM), the French Ministry of Health and, with respect to technical aspects, in conjunction with industrial and institutional players involved in image transmission networks.

7. Radiologists
 - The two aspects of teleradiology, telediagnosis and teleexpertise -- are complimentary to the usual local practice of radiologists
 - Teleradiology must respect all the quality criteria and the medical and radiological steps of patient management, as follows:
 - Initial physical examination
 - Validation and justification of the examination
 - Radioprotection of the patient and staff
 - Image acquisition performed by a radiographer under the responsibility of a radiologist physician
 - Image analysis and interpretation by the radiologist
 - Interview with the patient and dialogue with the patient's clinician(s)
 - Organization of the radiological staff
 - The radiologist must hold all the permits required to practice in France
8. The organization of teleradiology as a medical organization must be validated by the on-site radiologist(s), the Regional Council of the College of Physicians (Conseil Departemental de l'Ordre des Médecins, CDOM), and the Regional Board of Radiologists, based on a written medical convention.
9. Communication

The teleradiologist must be able to communicate directly with the clinician at the site from which the images are transmitted, and the medical convention should clearly state his or her obligations in case of an emergency, or the need to visit the site
10. The contractual documentation must include:
 - A medical convention signed individually by all radiologists and clinicians, based on the national guidelines of the French Society of Radiologists and validated by the National Council of the College of Physicians (CNOM). This convention must describe in detail how the patient is taken in charge by teleradiology – including emergencies – from initial validation of the examination to the treatment implications. A legal annex must list the responsibilities of each signatory to the contract, in accordance with the National Guidelines of the French Society of Radiology. Separate criteria must be provided for the medical quality of radiological patient management and patient safety (quality assurance policy).
 - A technical convention signed by the applicant site(s), teleradiologists and the industrial or institutional infrastructure ensuring technical support for remote image transmission. This convention must describe in detail the technical requirements for the equipment and data management network, including archiving and communication systems, as well as maintenance and breakdown services. Separate criteria must be provided for the quality and safety control procedures (quality assurance policy).
 - One or several financial annexes must specify the payment modalities for the radiologists' fees on the one hand, and the image transmission network provider on the other hand.
11. Ethics and Safety
 - The patient must be informed of and approve his/her medical teleradiological management procedures
 - The security system for patient identification, confidentiality, and identification of the physicians and teleradiologists must comply with medical ethical standards and with relevant French legislation.