



## TECHNICAL & ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR THE RADIATION THERAPY PROFESSION

### **Description of the Profession:**

Radiation Therapists deliver care to the patient in the therapeutic setting and are responsible for the simulation and administration of a prescribed course of radiation therapy. Radiation therapists assume direct responsibility for the well-being of the patient preparatory to, during and following the delivery of daily treatment.

### **Technical Standards:**

The radiation therapist/individuals admitted to radiation therapy program to become a radiation therapist must have sufficient emotional and physical strength, motor coordination and quantitative abilities required to perform the following activities:

1. Work in a clinical setting eight to ten hours a day, frequently performing physical tasks, requiring physical energy without jeopardizing patient, self, or colleague safety.
  - Able to walk, stand, bend or squat for majority of shift.
  - Utilize proper body mechanics.
  - Assess patient's ambulatory status and be able to assist as necessary.
  - Able to focus and concentrate for long periods of time, in a busy environment
2. Frequent reaching, lifting, and the use of manual dexterity in the manipulation and operation of equipment as well as for the creation of immobilization devices.
  - Able to reach 6 feet above the floor. Example: Lift treatment accessories and beam shaping devices weighing thirty (30) pounds of weight up and over one's head. May use step stool if needed.
  - Manually position patients that are lying on a treatment couch that may be 4-5 feet above the floor. May use step stool if needed.
  - Use proper technique during patient transfer. Able to lift, pull, and push up to fifty (50) pounds.
  - Make fine adjustments to equipment using a hand pendant with thumbwheel controls.
3. Frequently transporting, moving, lifting and transferring patients from a wheelchair or stretcher to and from a treatment/simulation table.
  - Push standard wheelchair from waiting area to treatment room.
  - Assist patients with mobility difficulties on and off the treatment couch.
  - Moving immobile patients from stretcher to treatment table with assistance from departmental personnel.
4. Ability to communicate information and instructions in clear and concise manner to patients and medical personnel.
  - Read and apply appropriate instructions located in treatment charts, computer monitors, notes and medical records.
  - Understand and apply clinical instructions given by departmental personnel.
  - Write clear and legible instructions and/or enter the clear instructions and daily treatment data in the patient's electronic radiation therapy chart.
  - Possess ability to work collaboratively with all members of the healthcare team.

5. Possess sufficient visual and aural acuity.
  - Report visual observations of patients and equipment operation as well as to read the patient's radiation records and medical information.
  - Vision must be adequate to align laser lights and crosshairs on patients in a dimmed light environment.
  - Ability to view computer screens for extended periods.
  - Visually monitor patients in dimmed light and via video monitors during treatment.
  - Audio monitoring of patients during treatment and perceiving and interpreting subtle equipment signals.
6. To have sufficient problem-solving skills to include measuring, calculating, reasoning, analyzing, evaluating and synthesizing with the ability to perform these skills in a timely fashion.
7. Utilize keyboard for inputting clinical data into treatment console and computers.
  - Ability to perform basic computer functions.
  - Ability to perform multiple computer functions
8. Display judgement in the assessment of patients
  - Demonstrate ability to verify patient's identity in accordance with institutional protocol.
  - Demonstrate ability to recognize limitations in their knowledge, skills, and abilities.
  - Seek appropriate assistance with identified limitations.
9. Accept criticism and adopt modification in self-behavior.
10. Possess the perseverance, diligence, and consistency.
  - To complete the program curriculum.
  - To enter into practice as a certified, registered, and licensed radiation therapist.
11. Demonstrate consistent ability to recognize and be sensitive to patient's emotional state and respond appropriately.
  - Provide physical and emotional support to patients during procedures.
  - Respond to situations requiring first aid and provide emergency service to patients in the absence of, or until the physician arrives in accordance with institutional protocol.
12. Relate and respond reasonably to patients.
  - Establish a sensitive, professional, and effective relationship with the patients.
  - Communicate verbally in an effective manner to direct patients during procedures.
  - Respond with precise, quick, and appropriate action in stressful and emergency situations.

## ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR THE RADIATION THERAPY PROGRAM

The Radiation Therapy Program is a fulltime program and the normal hours of operation are Mondays through Fridays from 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM.

The class times are normally between 8:30 AM and 3:00 PM.  
Clinical Internships are 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM.

1. The ability to read and comprehend textbooks and other materials that are written at the college/professional level is necessary for success in the program. In addition, many instructors require weekly written assignments and/or term papers/research papers. The expectation is that you are proficient in writing at the college level and can do basic research.
2. The didactic (classroom) work is intensive and normally requires a minimum of 15-20 hours of work per week outside of the classroom hours. Due to the importance of the work of a radiation therapist the passing grade for each course is a "C". Any grade less than a "C" is considered a failing grade for most health science programs.
3. Lecture format is used for much of the instruction/learning of the academic content. This is due to the nature of the course content and the amount of required course content. Most courses meet for two-three hour blocks of time and thus the ability to focus in the academic setting is a necessity.