Overview
To improve the quality of patient care, the American College of Radiology (ACR) developed the National Radiology Data Registry (NRDR), a compilation of registry databases comparing practice performance to regional and national benchmarks. One of these registry databases is the General Radiology Improvement Database (GRID), which collects evidence-based health outcomes and process data. This information is made available to other facilities participating in GRID to compare site-specific data to regional and national benchmarks for quality improvement.
Q&A

What is the General Radiology Improvement Database? The General Radiology Improvement Database (GRID) is a registry developed by the American College of Radiology (ACR) for collecting and aggregating performance indicators from imaging facilities for the purpose of quality improvement. It allows facilities and physicians to compare turnaround times, patient wait times, patient satisfaction, and many other process and outcome measures with other facilities and practices of similar size and type.

For physicians participating in the CMS’s Physician Quality Reporting Initiative (PQRI), GRID provides a means of comparing results of the various imaging measures included in the initiative. GRID is a component of the ACR’s National Radiology Data Registry (NRDR), which collects a wide variety of data related to the practice of radiology.

Why was GRID developed? Radiologists who wish to make objective, evidence-based decisions about their practice and performance need to know where they stand in relation to the practice of radiology as a whole. At present, however, there is no easy way for them to compare their performance to other similar facilities, facilities in the same region, or facilities on a national level. With this need in mind, the ACR established GRID to provide accurate and objective national and regional benchmarks for practice processes and outcomes.

How does it work? Participants submit a variety of performance data from their site to GRID each month. Then, every six months, participants receive a report comparing quality metrics from their site to metrics calculated using aggregate data from all participants for the same period. Participants can also compare their metrics to aggregate metrics from institutions of similar type and size.

What information is collected? Information related to volume, structural measures, protocols, personnel training, safety, process measures, and outcomes is collected for each facility. Participants also have the option of reporting certain data elements by physician. Specific data elements are listed on the data collection forms, which can be found at http://nrdr.acr.org/GRIDforms.htm.

What metrics are reported to participants? Reports include:
- Rates of attended and unattended falls, deaths, code blues, nosocomial infections, and wrong exams
- Patient wait time, time from order to exam, report turnaround time
- Reacquisition rate
- Rates of nondiagnostic liver and lung biopsies, CT extravasation, and nonconcordant stereotactic breast biopsies
- CMS PQRI measures

Facilities that choose to submit physician data receive reports at both the facility and physician level.

How are these metrics defined? The formulas used for calculating the metrics can be found on the GRID Web site at http://nrdr.acr.org/GRIDmetrics.htm.

How was the content of GRID determined? The ACR invited a panel of radiologists from diverse practice settings to collaborate in developing GRID. The panel identified a set of metrics for which data would be both easily collected and contribute significantly to quality improvement efforts.

Why should I participate? GRID provides your practice with a unique opportunity to learn how your processes compare with those of other facilities across North America. In addition, by participating in GRID, you will help the ACR develop a clearer understanding of the current practice of radiology.

How much does it cost? The cost of participation is determined by the number of modalities employed at your facility. A discount applies if you participate in at least one other NRDR registry. Specific cost information is available on the NRDR Web site at https://nrdr.acr.org/FAQs.htm.

How long does it take to enter the data requested? This depends on the number of modalities employed at your site and whether you choose to report physician data. However, the amount of data requested has been kept at a minimum to avoid adding unnecessarily to your process workflow.

How will my data be used? In addition to providing you with the quality metrics mentioned above, the ACR will aggregate your data with data from other facilities to establish national benchmarks, as well as benchmarks for facilities of similar size and type. The aggregate data may also be used for research purposes.

Who will have access to my data? Only members of your staff and ACR administrators will have access to your data. Aggregate data with identifying information removed may be released to third parties for research purposes, subject to ACR approval. In no case will data identified with your practice be available to anyone other than your staff and ACR administrators.

When will benchmarks be available? Benchmarks, consisting of metrics calculated from data submitted by all participating practices, will be available every six months. These metrics will be included in the reports you receive from GRID.

Do I have to enter all the data requested? Yes. This will ensure that the benchmarks will be as accurate as possible.

Will other metrics be added in the future? Other metrics may be added in the future if they contribute to quality improvement without excessively extending the data collection process.

Who can participate? GRID is open to all imaging facilities.

How do I sign up? Fill out the preregistration form on the NRDR Web site at https://nrdr.acr.org/regform.htm. You will receive a user name and password by e-mail, as well as instructions for completing the registration.

Are there any other requirements for participation? You must sign the NRDR Participation Agreement. This document is available on the NRDR Web site at http://nrdr.acr.org/NDRRPA.htm.

Is GRID HIPAA-compliant? GRID does not collect patient-specific information, so HIPAA regulations do not apply.

Does my site need IRB approval to participate in NRDR? Since you will be submitting data to GRID for the purpose of quality assurance and peer review, it is not required that you obtain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval. The ACR has obtained a document from its IRB stating that NRDR registry activities qualify as an exemption. Even though it is not required, you may choose to request an exemption from your IRB.

Whom should I contact with questions? Contact the NRDR Administrator at 703-648-8958 or nrdr@acr.org.