**AGFA DR IMAGING PLATE**Drs van Rensburg and Partners Southern Africa Inc.

Springs, 5 August 2020

The COVID-19 global pandemic has added immense strain on healthcare workers, working on the frontline during the pandemic. Healthcare professionals face mental stress, physical exhaustion, being separated from their families as well as the emotional trauma of losing patients, who become like family while being treated.

Radiographers are no exception to this, they also face these collective traumatic events, not only nationally but globally. Radiographers come in contact with numerous patients a day. Changing the radiographer's life indefinitely; becoming more aware of the spaces they perform their duties in and the equipment they use. This awareness becomes heightened more so when a radiographer has to work with a possible COVID-19 patient.

Diagnostic Radiographers have become instrumental in the process of determining possible COVID-19 cases, especially how patients are progressing and recovering from the virus. A chest x-ray has become one of the diagnostic examinations in conjunction with clinical history and molecular testing. As per department protocol, the patients being tested or treated for COVID-19 receives a portable chest x-ray to limit exposure of staff, equipment and department, increasing the number of portable x-rays, especially in COVID-19 ICU’s and wards.

In limiting the risk of exposure to the virus, CR cassettes have been wrapped in plastic cling wrap or linen savers to dispose of afterwards. Increasing turn-around time for x-rays as each cassette needs to be cleaned after each patient.

Radiographers also have to wear full PPE’s which includes: a disposable gown, plastic apron and sleeves, double gloves, N95 mask, face shield, theatre cap and boots. This also then increases the turn-around time for radiographers, and the pressure they are under.

Through using the AGFA Retrofit DR panel and adding it to portable machines it has had a tremendous impact on the radiographer’s lives, especially with its high-speed image acquisition and excellent image quality, providing a high-speed workflow for radiographers, during these crucial times.

In the past a request for a chest x-ray would come from a ward, once in the ward, it would become known that other chest x-rays need to be done for other patients. This placed tremendous stress on the radiographer as she would have to contact the Radiography Department and ask assistance from a colleague to bring more cassettes down to the ward. AGFA’s new plate allows the radiographer to conduct more x-rays on various patients, limiting exposure of colleagues to the virus. The plate developed by AGFA allows for immediate viewing, permitting the radiographer to assess x-rays onsite and repeat if there is a need.

This allows for multiple departments (ICU’s, HCU’s etc.) to be imaged as the plate is easy to clean. The DR plate also assists and eases turn-around time in the Radiography Department due to its versatile nature.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

“The images produced with the new imaging plate allow easier interpretation and has superior image quality when comparing to previous images obtained. Little or no exposure settings need to change during the report, this allows for more accurate and faster report output in our department”. –Dr H.T. Mistry, Radiologist, Drs van Rensburg and Partners Southern Africa Inc.

“Due to longer working hours and minimum staff during the pandemic, the AGFA DR plate has increased the workflow of radiographers. I would like to thank AGFA for sponsoring the DR plate to our department, I would also like to thank Carika Smit and the AGFA team that made it possible and installed the system in our department. We are extremely grateful”. - Chantal Vermaak, Head Radiographer, Drs van Rensburg and Partners Southern Africa Inc.

“Having a Digital x-ray panel and a tablet has changed our lives tremendously at Springs Parklands Radiology department especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The number of portable chest x-rays per day has increased.

On the day that we received the digital x-ray panel and tablet, we were sceptical, but once we tried it, it was an amazing experience. Having a digital plate helps us a lot, the reason being we don't have to carry many cassettes and cover many cassettes and also get our patients x-rays mixed up. We now can enter the patient’s name not having the fear of incorrectly processing the x-ray under the wrong patient. The digital panel is user friendly and easy to transport to the wards and most importantly it gives us great detail and a really good image quality as if the image was done in the x-ray department.

We at Springs Parklands Radiology department are extremely grateful to AGFA for sponsoring us their tablet and digital x-ray panel, it has truly helped us especially in the increase of COVID-19 patients and the number of portables that we do. AGFA thank you for making Radiographers lives better and we would like to say keep up the good work regarding your products”. - Michelle Rampersad, Diagnostic Radiographer, Drs van Rensburg and Partners Southern Africa Inc.