

RPC WEBPAGE NEWSLETTER

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The RPC's TLD Remote Monitoring Program: Who gets it, when, and why?

The Radiological Physics Center (RPC) is funded by the National Cancer Institute (NCI) to monitor the quality of treatments at radiation therapy facilities that participate in NCI – sponsored cooperative clinical trials. The RPC has been funded continuously since 1968 for this purpose, although our techniques have altered over the years. We monitor the quality of treatments by making on-site visits, by reviewing patient treatment records, and through a mailed TLD monitoring program.

The mailed TLD monitoring program is the mainstay of RPC operations. TLDs are sent at approximately 8-12 month intervals to all radiation therapy facilities that treat patients on national clinical trials. The TLDs are generally sent to the medical physicist who has been identified to us as principally responsible for quality assurance.

How do we decide which facilities should receive TLD?

Institutions are identified through several mechanisms: a study group such as the Radiation Therapy Oncology Group (RTOG) may notify us that a radiation therapy facility has joined as a member or affiliate member. An umbrella organization such as the Cancer Trials Support Unit (CTSU) may notify us that a member of one study group (such as RTOG) wishes to submit patients to a clinical trial sponsored by another NCI – sponsored study group, such as the National Surgical Adjuvant Breast and Bowel Project (NSABP). Sometimes we learn of an institution's participation only when we receive a patient's treatment record from that institution to review for a particular protocol.

Once we learn of an institution's involvement, we contact the institution with a request for certain basic information, and provide the details of our monitoring program. From that point on, the institution will receive TLDs on a regular basis until we are informed that the institution will no longer participate in any clinical trials.