



# Experience Speaks

West Physics Consulting serves up accreditation success, quality improvement and radiation safety with confidence, parlaying their comfort zone to your safety zone.

By **Dennis L. Runnion, MBA**

**W**est Physics Consulting (WPC) is a nationwide provider of diagnostic medical physics services, specializing in American College of Radiology (ACR) and Intersocietal Accreditation Commission (IAC) accreditation. In addition to accreditation and state X-ray compliance testing, WPC also assists facilities with radiation shielding design, performs dose calculations and serves as radiation safety officer for radioactive materials licenses across the U.S. Headquartered in Atlanta, WPC's primary mission is to help imaging providers maintain optimal clinical image quality and radiation safety, while ensuring total regulatory compliance.

One of WPC's claims to fame is its nationwide reach. Prior to the company's establishment eight years ago, medical physics firms were local or regional in scope. If consultants accepted business outside their region, they'd subcontract the work to another firm or individual. W. Geoffrey West, MEng, DABR, CHP, wanted to provide services nationwide in a high-quality, consistent and economical manner—using only full-time employees so technical and service quality could be closely monitored. His vision was to exceed the traditional model of a small firm with limited exposure to advanced modalities.

By specializing in ACR accreditation of MRI, CT and nuclear medicine/PET, as well as nuclear medicine auditing and regulatory consulting, West, now CEO, president and chief medical physicist, worked with his staff to create a company that provides expertise in the modalities that anchor most imaging practices while maintaining familiarity with all types of imaging equipment. By intelligently managing and scheduling survey appointments, West Physics Consulting created logistical systems that keep its travel costs equivalent to (or even below) local firms, with response times for urgent work (e.g., work caused by a repair or replacement) on the order of hours.

An additional claim to fame is WPC's ability to simplify and consolidate the physics services for a hospital or imaging center network, enabling the organization to leverage its size for optimum value and service. Every hospital or center calls the same toll-free service number and speaks to a live consultant to address individual needs. Center or hospital managers don't require independent vetting or managing of a separate local vendor relationship. Additionally, the expert systems in place allow WPC—and facilities—to stay on top of changing radioactive materials requirements and X-ray regulations in all 50 states.

Availability is also key. West Physics efficiently services very remote areas. We have great stories about trips to Alaska ... in January! WPC also maintains extended office hours so customers across the U.S. can reach a human being—not a voicemail system—when it's most convenient for them.

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With the Medicare Improvement for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) bill requiring all nonhospital providers of MRI, CT and nuclear medicine/PET to be accredited by 2012, West Physics Consulting maintains that their services are more relevant than ever. When customers wish to navigate this complex process quickly and successfully on the first attempt, they look to WPC's 99.8 percent first-round ACR pass rate and experience with literally thousands of accreditations.

Since its humble beginnings serving a single customer in a rented Ypsilanti, Mich., apartment in 2002, West Physics Consulting has grown to serve over 1,000 client sites in 49 states, Puerto Rico and the Bahamas. Through a continued emphasis on real-world image quality improvement, radiation safety, accreditation success and regulatory compliance, WPC's phenomenal growth has earned three-time recognition with *Inc. Magazine* for the publication's "Inc. 5,000" award of fastest-growing U.S. private companies. WPC staff members achieved this feat while maintaining an "A+" rating from the Better Business Bureau (BBB), which demonstrates the company's commitment to ethics and honesty. ■

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