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The Job Market in Argentina



Ricardo García- Mónaco,
Chairman and Professor of
Radiology

*****@***hospitalitaliano.org.ar

Chairman and Professor of
Radiology - Hospital Italiano

In Argentina there are approximately 4000 radiologists. However, not all of them are board-certified. To work as a radiologist it is not compulsory to be board-certified. In certain medical colleges and in the ministry of health you may be employed as a radiologist if you can prove practice in a radiology department during 5 consecutive years (even half day work). In this way, radiologists obtain their specialisation without certification. Any radiologist may sit the examination for the certification by the Sociedad Argentina de Radiología (SAR) if they wish, but it is not compulsory by law to practise as a radiologist in Argentina. However, certification demonstrates an excellent level and quality.

Every year, around 80 radiologists graduate in Argentina. To graduate the MD should do a residency of 4 years and pass approved exams in an official institute (Sociedad Argentina de Radiología, public or private universities, province medical associations, and so on). Half of them graduate in Buenos Aires from the Sociedad Argentina de Radiología (SAR) which has the most recognised programme.

All graduates find employment in our country. There are not enough graduates to fill the demand, and now there is a shortage of radiologists. Vacancies will increase in the next few years. Very few radiologists move abroad, and if they do so this is not because they do not have offers in Argentina, but because they would like to explore other possibilities. However, it has happened in times of crisis in the country (e.g. in 2001 when there was economic turmoil in Argentina) that young radiologists emigrated to find new and better horizons, especially to Spain.

Most radiologists who seek education and further training overseas are young and well trained. It is common that they go abroad, mainly to Europe, and are retained by the site or country where they went for training. To avoid this problem, some institutions sign agreements with physicians that if they go for further education in Europe sponsored by the institution, they are required to return and work for a reasonable amount of years before departing. If that does not occur then the sponsored radiologist has to pay back a given amount of money to the institution that supported his/her education and granted his training overseas.

My own hospital has hi-tech facilities, an excellent teaching and research programme and continuous medical education. In addition salaries are good so it is not difficult for us to retain the best radiologists. However, this is not the case in every hospital or private centre, and strategies are overall oriented to economic revenues.

Few radiologists enter an academic career, which is why the opportunities for training of radiologists are very heterogeneous because well trained highly equipped academic hospitals are rather few.

Most radiologists will go into private practice. The public sector is under-developed in terms of technology and facilities. Private university hospitals and some private outpatient clinics tend to be better resourced. There are no full-time radiologists in the public sector. Radiologists work only part-time in the public sector.

There are not enough radiologists to fill the posts available. Currently this gap is filled by radiologists from other Latin America countries (such as Ecuador, Colombia, Bolivia, etc.) Most of them are young and have performed a fellowship or residency in Argentina, and are not willing to go back to their country in the near future. Other specialists also perform radiology as a subspeciality, e.g. neurologists perform neuroradiology, paediatricians perform paediatric ultrasound or radiology.

The global crisis has not caused serious problems so far in our country. There have been no cuts so far, because the crisis has affected mainly the USA and Europe. However, it would not be surprising that if the crisis continues in the near future it would affect medical imaging, mainly in terms of technology updating.

However, when there have been economic crises in Argentina, the impact on medical imaging was huge. The biggest problem would affect not only medical revenues but especially in the inability to buy new equipment and renovate obsolete technology.

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