

The Society Of Radiographers Of Trinidad & Tobago

The Society of Radiographers of Trinidad & Tobago was founded in 1973 with Wilma Collins becoming the first President elect of the Society.

Since its beginning, the Society has held numerous seminars and conferences to help update its members and promote the profession. This academic role has been mandated by its constitution together with its objectives. One of the Society's first stated objectives according to its Memorandum of Association is:

"To encourage and promote the establishment and maintenance of high professional, technical and ethical standards in the Science of Medical Imaging and Radiotherapy."

The Society became internationally recognized when it gained full membership status into the International Society of Radiographers and Radiological Technologists (ISRRT) four years after its inception.

As part of its constitution an annual general meeting must be held to elect a new leadership or *Executive Committee* to comprise of eight Registered Radiographers, one of whom is chosen to be a Council Member to the ISRRT.

In 2008, the Society developed a website which carries the society's history, local/international news and events, forums and more. It is intended to keep viewers up-to-date with the progress of the association.

To become a Radiographer you can apply to the College of Science, Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad & Tobago (COSTAATT) to earn a Bachelor of Science Degree in Radiography or Radiation Therapy. Radiographers through this course of study have gone on to practice locally, regionally and internationally as far as Europe, USA and Canada. Post graduate qualifications in other imaging modalities (e.g. CT, Ultrasound, MRI, etc.) can be done via local and/or foreign institutions or even by distance learning.

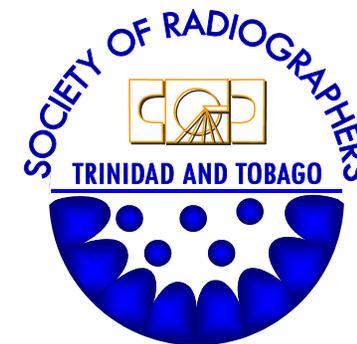


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of Trinidad & Tobago*



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Who are Radiographers...



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History of X-rays...

Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen discovered an “unknown” ray called “X-ray” on the 8th November 1895. He called the new rays “X” because X is the symbol for the unknown. Röntgen was a physicist at the University of Würzburg, Germany.

Before the discovery, Röntgen was absorbed in his work and devoted all his attention to studying this phenomenon. He ate his meals in the laboratory and sometimes slept there. His wife wanted to know why he was spending all this time in the lab. Eventually he took his wife to the lab where he explained his experiment and took the first “Radiograph” or “X-ray” of her hand.

Röntgen knew of the penetrating power of these new rays so he cautioned the use of the x-rays without proper precautions. He advised that doors be covered with lead for protection.

In 1901, Röntgen was awarded the first Nobel Prize for Physics.

Before the turn of the 20th Century Trinidad & Tobago saw its first X-ray machine in operation at the Port of Spain General Hospital which meant that as a small nation we were technologically up-to-date.

Since the introduction of the first X-ray machine we have seen tremendous advancement in the numbers and technological expertise of Radiographers in Trinidad and Tobago.

“**Radiographers**” are health-care professionals allied to medicine who work in X-ray, Radiology, Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy departments. Radiographers work in close association with specialist physicians, namely Radiologists and Radiation Oncologist.

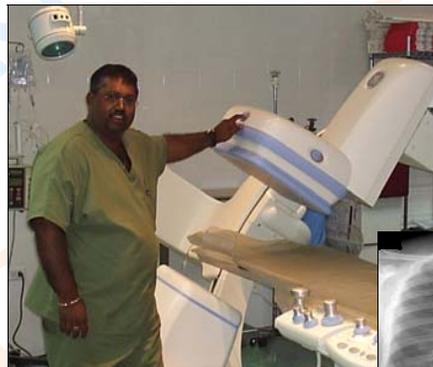
There are basically two types of Radiographers:

- **Diagnostic Radiographers**
- **Radiation Therapy Radiographers**

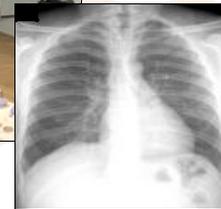
Note: The term X-ray Technician describes the professional who fixes or repairs X-ray equipment and not the Radiographer.

Diagnostic Radiographers...

Diagnostic Radiographers (or *Radiological Technologists*) perform X-ray examinations by positioning the patient/client on radiographic equipment, determining and setting the radiation exposure of the X-ray generator unit to produce detailed images of the region of the body that is being investigated.



Diagnostic Radiographer with X-ray Unit



Chest Radiograph or Chest X-ray

In Trinidad & Tobago there are at least two hundred Diagnostic Radiographers who are employed in the public and private sectors and who have advanced their careers in various specializations. Diagnostic Radiographers can further specialize in areas such as, but not limited to, Mammography, Computed Tomography (CT), Ultrasonography, Echocardiography, Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), Interventional/Vascular and Nuclear Medicine.

All Radiographers, including Radiation Therapy Radiographers are required by law (Act No. 35 of 1985) to be registered with the Council for the Professions related to Medicine / Radiographers’ Board to practice in this country.

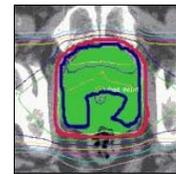
Radiation Therapy Radiographers...

Radiation Therapy Radiographers (or *Radiation Therapists*) use specialized radiation emitting and treatment planning equipment, such as linear accelerators, in order to administer radiation treatment (for cancer) to a patient.

The practice of Radiation Therapy has become so sophisticated that treatment is even more precise with modern equipment.



Radiation Therapy Radiographer positioning a patient on a linear accelerator unit



Radiation planning of the prostate

Radiation Therapy centers are very few in Trinidad & Tobago, both publicly and privately, due to the high cost of the equipment and set up.

Radiation Therapy Radiographers are much less in number as compared to their diagnostic counterparts.

In times past, to study to be a Radiation Therapy, or Diagnostic, Radiographer one had to travel overseas, but more recently the option of studying in Trinidad is now a reality. Persons interested in entering the profession can now do so locally. The need for Radiographers continues to be high in our local health care system as well as, regionally and internationally.

The future of Radiographers is full of possibilities as the field is ever expanding and technology is always improving. Radiographers are poised to interface between operating advanced technology and caring for the human being.