

Ergonomic Reading Room Design Improves Collaborative Workflow and Staff Health

The old reading room at Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre in Hamilton, Ontario, sandwiched between Ultrasound and Mammography on the second floor of the hospital, was cramped and poorly lit for the two radiologists who had to read at workstations without ergonomic adjustments. The small space could not accommodate more than two people at each station at a time, which also made it cumbersome for the radiologists when they had to stand and view older mammography films in a view box.

The development of the new CIBC Breast Assessment Centre at the Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre created an unique opportunity to develop a new ergonomic radiology reading room environment that addressed all the issues with the existing space. Radiologists, technologists and ergonomic specialists were among those included on the capital development steering committee to ensure input was gathered from all constituents. When determining where the reading room should be located within the new breast assessment centre, flow into and out of the reading room was a major consideration. Because Juravinski Hospital is a teaching institution, design goals also included enabling radiologists to easily collaborate with colleagues and staff, and ensuring technologists and residents would be able to sit or stand behind the radiologists to learn and ask questions without being in the way. The layout of the radiologists

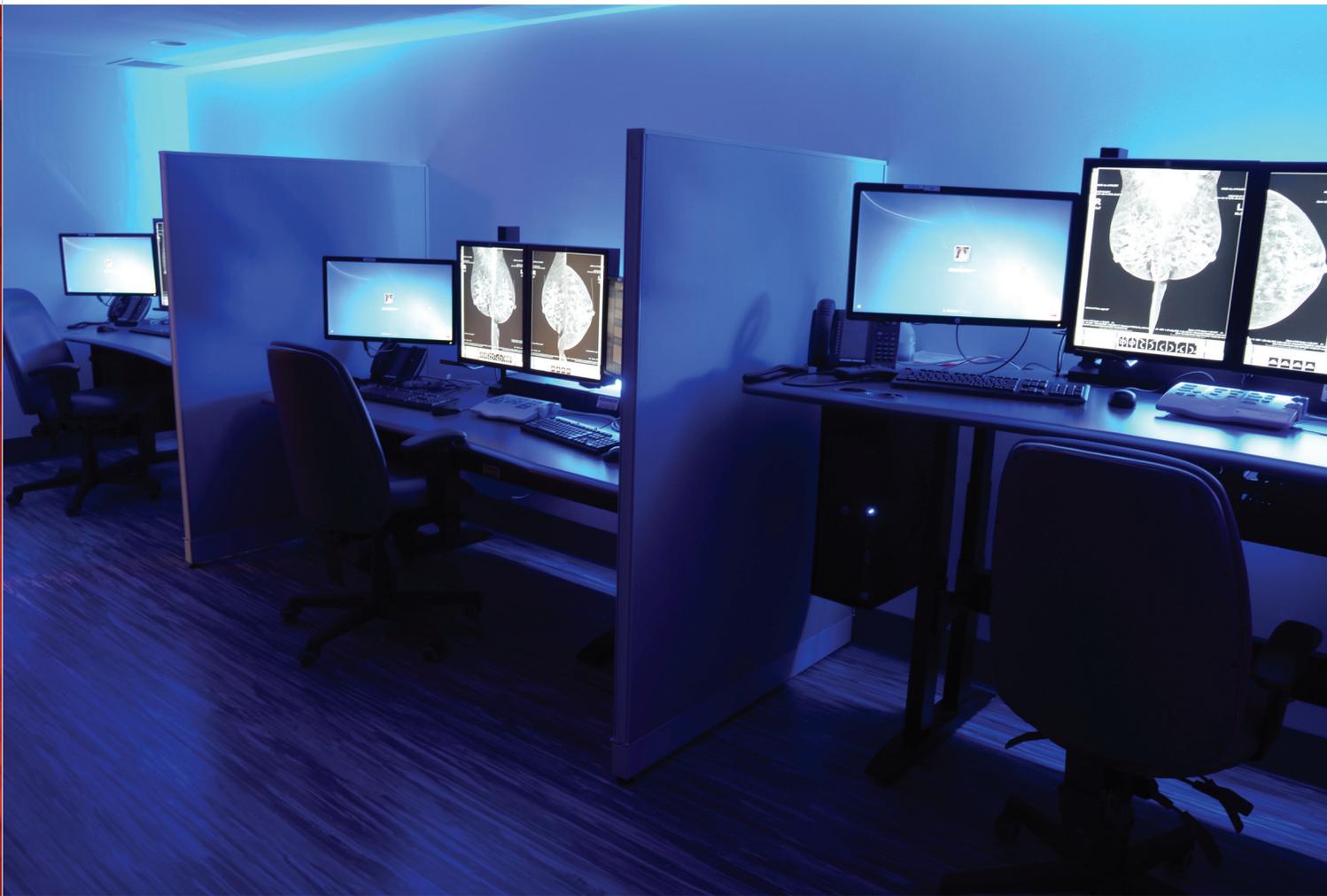
workstation within the reading room as well as their ergonomic design, were carefully considered to ensure the radiologists were able to work comfortably and efficiently in the new space.

The new reading room environment enables the radiologists who work there to be more accessible to colleagues and staff, enhancing their value as consultants and educators. The design of the workstations, which includes integrated back lighting, reduces eye strain and encourages good ergonomic practices, which minimizes the risks of back, neck and wrist injuries to the radiologists as they read studies and offer their expertise. "As a result of optimizing the location and layout of the reading room, we are able to enhance the workflow for our radiologists and department staff," says Kavita Dhamanaskar, MBBS, FRCPC, Associate Professor and Staff Radiologist in the Department of Diagnostic Imaging and Medical Director of the CIBC Breast Assessment Centre.

Improved Ergonomics

The new reading room is also larger, and includes monitor backlighting at each workstation as well as adjustable ambient room lighting. There is ample space to enable three radiologists to work simultaneously at their ergonomic sit/stand workstations, which can





accommodate up to three people each. The lighting, configuration and room arrangement also allows easy access for visitors to the reading room to encourage interaction with the radiologists. The reading workstations can also be easily adjusted so that everyone sitting behind or beside them can have a clear view of the monitors. Motorizing the tabletops and monitor mounts was one of the most significant improvements, Dr. Dhamanaskar says. Work surfaces and displays can be easily adjusted to reduce fatigue and muscle strain that can build as radiologists work through their caseloads.

Encouraging Collaboration

While the new reading room design and ergonomic radiologist workstations by RedRick Technologies fosters collaboration, they also provide needed privacy so that radiologists can read without interruption. "All the pieces work together; the room is welcoming to those who need to collaborate in person, while the radiologists who work in it can be assured the ergonomic design will help reduce repetitive stress injuries." Dr. Dhamanaskar says. "We believe a good work environment is a key component to successful workflow."

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