



## NBRCMRT Position Statement

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### Breast Ultrasound Examinations

#### 1. Purpose

To clarify the expectations of the New Brunswick Regulatory College of Medical Radiation Technologists' (NBRCMRT) regarding the performance of breast ultrasound examinations by Radiologic Technologists in New Brunswick and to outline the conditions under which such examinations may be performed where service delays would be contrary to the public interest.

#### 2. Background

Although Diagnostic Medical Sonography is not currently a regulated profession in New Brunswick, the practice of diagnostic medical sonography is a distinct health profession with nationally recognized standards of education and competence.

The College acknowledges that, in some regions, Radiologic Technologists working in mammography departments may perform breast ultrasounds following mammographic findings or as a preliminary assessment of observed changes in breast tissue. The College considers the performance of handheld diagnostic breast ultrasound examinations to constitute the practice of diagnostic medical sonography.

However, based on the practices of other MRT regulators across Canada, the College recognizes that this practice occurs in several jurisdictions, particularly in breast imaging settings.

##### 2.1. Automated Breast Ultrasound (ABUS)

Automated Breast Ultrasound (ABUS) is a standardized, automated breast imaging acquisition modality that is distinct from handheld diagnostic breast ultrasound. Unlike handheld diagnostic breast ultrasound, ABUS uses a standardized acquisition protocol and does not require real-time scanning, image optimization, or diagnostic interpretation by the technologist during image acquisition. The acquired image dataset is subsequently interpreted by the interpreting physician.

For the purposes of this Position Statement, the College considers ABUS to be an image acquisition modality. Radiologic Technologists who have successfully completed employer-approved education and vendor-specific applications training, and who have demonstrated competence through employer validation, may perform ABUS image acquisition within the MRTs scope of practice.



The performance of ABUS image acquisition does not authorize a Radiologic Technologist to perform handheld diagnostic breast ultrasound examinations or to independently optimize, interpret, or report ultrasound findings. The education, competency, and practice requirements for handheld diagnostic breast ultrasound examinations remain unchanged and are outlined in Section 3.

### 3. College Position

The College recognizes that access to timely breast imaging services is an important component of patient care. Where service delays would be contrary to the public interest, the College supports the performance of handheld diagnostic breast ultrasound examinations by qualified Radiologic Technologists under the conditions set out below.

Radiologic Technologists may perform handheld diagnostic breast ultrasound examinations under Radiologist supervision provided all following conditions are met:

- (a) they have obtained certification in breast ultrasound from:
  - Sonography Canada;
  - the American Registry of Diagnostic Medical Sonographers (ARDMS);
  - the Medical Technology Management Institute (MTMI); or
  - equivalent formal education and training in breast ultrasound consistent with national standards; and
- (b) they have demonstrated competence through documented on-the-job training, assessment, supervised practice, and employer validation;
- (c) they have the knowledge, skills, and judgement to perform the procedure;
- (d) they follow the Canadian Association of Radiologists' (CAR) Practice Guidelines and Technical Standards for Breast Imaging and Intervention;
- (e) they engage in applicable continuing education competency;
- (f) they have adequate professional liability insurance coverage for ultrasound duties;
- (g) the activity is supported by employer policies, clinical governance structures, and appropriate supervision models; and
- (h) the performance of breast ultrasound remains an adjunct component of the Radiologic Technologist's practice and does not constitute their primary area of practice.

If any of these conditions are not met, the Radiologic Technologists **must not** perform breast ultrasound examinations.



#### 4. Radiologist Supervision

For the purposes of this Position Statement, Radiologist-supervised means that the supervising Radiologist is immediately available for consultation and able to attend the examination if required.

#### 5. Use of Title

Radiologic Technologists who perform breast ultrasound examinations under this Position Statement:

- must not represent themselves as Diagnostic Medical Sonographers (DMS) or imply that they are registered, certified, or qualified as a Diagnostic Medical Sonographer unless they hold such credentials independently
- must not hold themselves out as practising as a Diagnostic Medical Sonographer; and
- must not identify sonography as a specialty of practice within their MRT registration.

The performance of breast ultrasound examinations under this Position Statement does not confer the designation, professional identity, or qualifications of a Diagnostic Medical Sonographer.

#### 6. Competency Requirements

Competence in breast ultrasound includes, but is not limited to:

- Knowledge of breast anatomy, pathology, and sonographic appearance
- Operation of ultrasound equipment and optimization of imaging parameters
- Application of scanning protocols and quality assurance standards
- Recognition of imaging findings requiring escalation to the supervising Radiologist
- Infection prevention and control
- Documentation and communication of findings

Competency must be verifiable, current, and maintained through continuing education. Employers are responsible for ensuring that competency assessment and validation processes are documented and retained for Radiologic Technologists performing breast ultrasound examinations under this Position Statement. Such documentation may be requested by the College where required for regulatory purposes.

#### 7. Liability and Insurance

Professional liability insurance for MRTs in New Brunswick is typically obtained directly by the registrant through their professional association or another insurer. Because liability insurance is not administered by the employer, the College cannot confirm whether an individual MRT is covered for breast ultrasound duties.

MRTs are responsible for:

- Contacting their insurance provider to obtain written confirmation of coverage



- Ensuring their policy explicitly includes ultrasound-related activities
- Retaining documentation for audit or employer verification

Employers are responsible for ensuring that assigned duties fall within the Radiologic Technologist's authorized and insured scope of practice.

## 8. Professional Obligations

MRTs must:

- Practise only within their authorized scope and demonstrated competence
- Decline assignments for which they are not trained, competent, or insured
- Seek clarification when employer expectations conflict with regulatory requirements
- Prioritize patient safety and ethical practice at all times

If a Radiologic Technologist is asked to perform breast ultrasound examinations without adequate training, competence, or insurance coverage, they must notify their employer and, if necessary, the College.

## 9. Summary Position

The College's position is as follows:

- Breast ultrasound examinations are not automatically within the Radiologic Technologist's scope of practice unless they are trained, competent, and insured to perform such examinations.
- Radiologic Technologists must obtain written confirmation of professional liability insurance coverage from their insurance provider before performing breast ultrasound duties.
- Employers must ensure that the Radiologic Technologists are properly trained, supported, and have appropriate professional liability insurance coverage before assigning breast ultrasound responsibilities.
- Radiologic Technologists are not to perform breast ultrasound examinations if any regulatory, competency, or insurance requirements are unmet.
- Automated Breast Ultrasound (ABUS) is recognized by the College as an image acquisition modality that is distinct from handheld diagnostic breast ultrasound. Qualified Radiologic Technologists may perform ABUS image acquisition in accordance with this Position Statement.

This Position Statement supports safe, ethical, and accountable practice in New Brunswick.



## References

Canadian Association of Radiologists. *CAR Practice Guidelines on Breast Imaging and Interventions: [Breast Ultrasound](#)*. Canadian Association of Radiologists Journal. 2026.

College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia. *Diagnostic Accreditation Program – [Automated Breast Ultrasound Policy](#)*. 2026.

Nova Scotia Regulator of Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy (NSRMIRT). *Position Statement: [Breast Ultrasounds](#)*. 2021.

| Version | Date          | Description of Change                                   | Approved By   |
|---------|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| v1.0    | May 12, 2026  | Initial date of position statement publication.         | NBRCMRT Board |
| v1.1    | June 14, 2026 | Clarified ABUS requirements and competency expectations | NBRCMRT Board |
| v1.2    | Sept 5, 2026  | Precision, clarity, and consistency refinements         | NBRCMRT Board |