

ICUS Endorses Expanded Role of Sonographers in CEUS Procedures

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CHICAGO--([BUSINESS WIRE](#))--More patients will now have access to safe and inexpensive diagnostic scans known as “contrast-enhanced ultrasound” (CEUS) as a result of the expanding role of sonographers, according to the International Contrast Ultrasound Society (ICUS).

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ICUS, a global medical society devoted to the safe and appropriate use of CEUS to improve patient care, announced Thursday that the organization enthusiastically endorses the new *Scope of Practice and Clinical Standards for the Diagnostic Medical Sonographer* released last week by the Society of Diagnostic Medical Sonography (SDMS). The sonographer *Scope of Practice* was last revised in 2015. ICUS was one of several organizations that participated in the current update.

“Sonographers play a vital role in conducting CEUS examinations, and continually learning new techniques, such as CEUS, is a core component of providing innovative care and elevating our profession,” said Maria Stanczak, a member of the ICUS board of directors who played a key role in updating CEUS content in the new *Scope of Practice*. Stanczak is also an Assistant Professor at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia.

The expanded *Scope of Practice* will reduce unnecessary logistical barriers to CEUS utilization by allowing trained professional sonographers to help determine when a CEUS examination is necessary, place an intravenous line and administer ultrasound contrast media, Stanczak said.

“This will help improve patient care as well as institutional work flows,” she added.

During a CEUS exam, an ultrasound enhancing agent (UEA), sometimes also called an ultrasound “contrast agent,” is injected intravenously to improve the clarity and functionality of the ultrasound image. UEAs do not contain dye, expose patients to ionizing radiation or create any known risk of kidney damage or deposit of contrast media in the brain.

“CEUS is a valuable diagnostic imaging tool that has been shown in multiple studies to improve diagnosis, help to obtain more accurate and precise measurements, and potentially reduce repeat testing and diagnostic imaging costs,” said Dr. Jordan Strom, a member of the ICUS board of directors who also played a key role in developing the new *Scope of Practice*. Dr. Strom is the Director of the Echocardiography Laboratory at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston.

Although CEUS is underutilized relative to need, its applications and uses are expanding globally for adult and pediatric imaging, and CEUS generally is safer and less expensive than contrast-enhanced CT or MR, Strom added.

“The new SDMS *Scope of Practice* represents a major step forward for professional sonographers and the patients they help care for,” said Beverly Gorman, a member of the ICUS board who also participated in the updated *Scope of Practice*. Gorman is a past Intersocietal Accreditation Commission Director of Accreditation for Echocardiography.

UEAs are manufactured and sold in the US and elsewhere by Bracco (Lumason and Sonovue), Lantheus (Definity, Luminity and Definity RT) and GE Healthcare (Optison and Sonazoid).