

# Policy For Recommended Alternative Imaging Echocardiography Laboratory

Policy Created: December 5, 2022

**Purpose:** To define a policy for recommended alternative imaging when ultrasound enhancing agents are unavailable, unable to be administered, or do not provide adequate visualization.

**Policy:** A policy for alternative imaging modalities must be in place in cases where the clinical indication for an echocardiographic study is assessment of global or regional left ventricular function or exclusion of left ventricular thrombus, yet images are of suboptimal quality due to poor endocardial delineation and ultrasound enhancing agents are either not utilized at the facility or are contraindicated.

In such cases, a recommendation should be made for either referral to an alternate site (i.e., hospital echo lab) that utilizes ultrasound enhancing agents or use of an alternative imaging modality as clinically indicated. The interpreting physician shall determine if an alternative imaging modality is recommended. Alternative imaging will generally be recommended for, but not limited to, studies:

1. where two or more contiguous LV segments (in any three of the apical views) or any coronary territory cannot be adequately visualized;
2. to exclude intracardiac thrombus or mass;
3. for the assessment of LV global function or regional wall motion; and/or
4. in settings in which the study indication requires accurate analysis of regional wall motion such as exercise stress or dobutamine stress echocardiography testing.

Alternative imaging modalities may include:

1. cardiac MRI with or without contrast;
2. cardiac CTA;
3. transesophageal echocardiography;
4. MUGA scan;
5. right and/or left heart catheterization;
6. alternative stress modalities;
7. other modalities deemed useful for the specific clinical question posed

**Procedure:** When the image quality is not optimal to answer the clinical question, the final report must note the reason the study was suboptimal as well as the recommended alternative imaging modality.