



Physician Spotlight: Dr. Nina Kottler

In March, [RP announced the launch of the Office of the Chief Medical Officer \(CMO\)](#), naming 13 radiologists to senior executive leadership roles. One newly named Associate CMO is Dr. Nina Kottler, Associate CMO for Clinical Artificial Intelligence.

Dr. Kottler is a diagnostic radiologist for Matrix, which serves numerous hospitals across the United States. Additionally, she leads the Data Science and Analytics division of RP's Clinical Value Team and is a member of RP's IT senior leadership team. In partnership with the RP Data Science and Digital Services teams, Dr. Kottler drove the creation and implementation of our AI tool, recoMD, to radiologists across our practice. She serves on RP's Innovation Steering Committee our AI, IT, Culture and Leadership support boards, and she leads the Education and Development affinity group for RP's Belonging committee. In her previous role as Vice President of Clinical Operations, Dr. Kottler developed RP's remote imaging division. She also serves on multiple external committees with the American College of Radiology, Radiological Society of North America, Society for Imaging Informatics in Medicine and RADxx. In 2017, Dr. Kottler received the RP Teamwork Value Award, and in 2018, she

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received the Trailblazer Award, which recognizes a pioneering female leader in the field of imaging informatics. She earned her medical degree from the University of Massachusetts in Worcester, Massachusetts, and completed her residency at the University of California, San Diego. She was the first radiologist to join RP (AKA Rad 1).

As Associate CMO of Clinical AI, Dr. Kottler will advance business intelligence by identifying new technologies, companies and use cases; support SVP strategy related to partnerships and alliances; help identify and oversee innovative pilot programs to enhance design, metrics and assessments; promote broader adoption of promising tools practice-wide to drive efficiency and accuracy; monitor performance of those implemented tools; help develop and deploy AI products that drive value for our patients, referring physicians, clients, radiologists and practice; and help design an IT infrastructure that supports this innovation.

We sat down with Dr. Kottler to learn more about her aspirations for RP's Office of the CMO and her role as Associate CMO for Clinical AI.

Tell us about your tenure/history with RP.

I joined Radiology Partners in April 2013, only a few months after the practice was founded. At that time, the only RP teammates were the two founders, Rich Whitney and Dr. Anthony Gabriel. Although we only lived only a couple of hours apart, I was introduced to them through an email sent to the members of the UCLA list-serv that was forwarded to me by a friend. The email noted that they looked to meet "forward-thinking radiologists." I answered that email, and shortly thereafter, I joined Rich and Anthony because I aligned with their vision about consolidating radiology practices to create a scaled group of physicians who could drive value and transform how radiology was practiced together. Unfortunately, there was no reading for me to do when we started since no practice had yet joined, so I agreed to work part time. In the summer of 2013, we created a deconstructed PACS platform, now referred to as RP Cloud. After Eagle Radiology joined us, I was asked to create a remote imaging service to support them and formed Matrix. Since that time I have worn many hats for RP including developing our first RadWiki, helping to create our first and second generation master exam code dictionary, serving as a member of OPLL, educating our physicians about ICD-10, helping to develop our strategy to thrive under MACRA, creating clinical programs as a forming member of the clinical value team to "make it easier for our radiologists to practice better," developing recoMD, coaching and mentoring radiologists and support teammates, and more.

What attracted you to RP?

I was depressed by what teleradiology had become and saw some of those same things happening at on-site practices. I didn't agree with the "quality" metrics being used to compare practices, including turn-around times and peer review scores. I felt we needed to go back to our roots as the physician's

physician and provide more value. Radiology needed a change. I was skeptical when I first met Rich and Anthony, because they were not radiologists, but that skepticism dissipated quickly when we started speaking. I was excited, and a bit shocked, that they understood the problems facing radiology and wanted to drive long-term outcomes. It was invigorating and refreshing to speak with them and hear their vision. People told me I was crazy, but I followed my heart and instinct and joined Rich and Anthony.

How has your experience prepared you for your role as Associate CMO of Clinical AI?

Although the Associate CMO of Clinical AI role is new, I have already been developing, testing and rolling out AI products for RP for several years. I have also been active in the AI space outside of RP, writing articles, giving interviews and presenting at multiple conferences. In 2017 I was recognized as an early trailblazer in the field of imaging informatics (honorable mention) and in 2018 won the RADxx trailblazer award for technological innovation in Radiology. I have served as a member of the ACR informatics commission, created use cases for the ACR data science institute, and continue to help develop the content for the SIIM annual meeting, serve on the SIIM AI vendor liaison committee and grade AI abstract submissions for the RSNA annual meeting.

What do you want to accomplish in this role?

Technological innovation can transform the practice of radiology. If implemented correctly, it can allow us to help improve outcomes for our patients; predict risk for disease; quantitatively assess response to treatment; provide more actionable information and data-driven insights to our referring clinicians; improve the efficiency, accuracy and robustness of our interpretations; and decrease costs. I'd like to bring this innovation to our practice as an early but effective adopter, providing best-in-class technology for our practice and leading the way for others.

What does the future of radiology look like in 5 years? 10 years? How will RP contribute to that?

In five years, RP radiologists will be using multiple AI algorithms in their daily workflow. That workflow will appear seamless because it is integrated into their workflow through an RP developed cloud platform. This platform will capture the output from each algorithm to improve the capabilities of our radiologists (through peer learning), improve the accuracy of our AI algorithms and enhance the value of our data. Our radiologists and data scientists will use this data to glean insights enabling the creation of new data-driven Best Practice Programs that drive value for patients, physicians, clients and payors.

In 10 years, other practices will be following in our footsteps improving quality while decreasing overall costs of healthcare. The role of the radiologist will have evolved from a reporter of information

to an information expert, integrating and translating data provided by multiple systems in order to provide precision care for our patients. The radiologist will be integrated into patient care, consulting with referring clinicians and communicating (directly and indirectly) with patients. Much of radiology will be consolidated into large practices. Radiologists will have a seat at the table using data to continue to define and drive value-based care.

Dr. Nina Kottler is the Associate Chief Medical Officer for Clinical Artificial Intelligence at [Radiology Partners](#), a leading physician-led and physician-owned radiology practice in the U.S. Follow her on Twitter at [@radkottler](#). For the latest news from RP, follow along on our [blog](#) and on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram](#).