



Cardiovascular Credentialing International (CCI) Registrant Spotlight

This section spotlights a CCI registrant for his or her accomplishments and dedication to the cardiovascular profession. Submissions may be sent to Christine Johnson via email at cjohnson@cci-online.org.

Dennis Atherton, ACS, RCS, RDCS (AE, PE), FASE, BSBA

Dennis Atherton began his career in the healthcare field as a Respiratory Therapist. His employer had purchased a cardiac ultrasound machine and could not find a cardiac sonographer, so they asked him if he was willing to learn cardiac echo, and he agreed. He has now been working in the cardiac ultrasound field for thirty-five years.

Dennis is currently employed as the Director of Cardiac Imaging and Diagnostics for Maine Medical Center in Portland, Maine, and has been employed there for fifteen years. Maine Medical Center performs over 20,000 scans a year, and this Intersocietal Accreditation Commission (IAC) Echocardiography lab is involved in TAVR, eclip, melody valves, ASD closures, LVAD devices, and a host of other interesting and challenging procedures. Maine Medical Center's echo lab also supports the Southern Maine Community College cardiac sonography program. Dennis' lab has a close working relationship with Philips Corporation and does research as well as product development with them, including pulmonary hypertension and prosthetic valve research.

Dennis devotes almost all of his free time to his small gentleman's farm, but it is a labor of love. He enjoys growing fruits and vegetables and raising chickens.

Regarding his thoughts on the essentiality of credentialing, Dennis states, "The majority of states do not have licensure. To ensure a basic skill level, I think passing the Registered Cardiac Sonographer (RCS) is essential for anyone performing scanning. I would not hire or employ someone who has not fulfilled this criterion."



As one of the first Advanced Cardiac Sonographer (ACS) credential holders, Dennis says, "Our profession is rapidly evolving, and the ability to show advanced knowledge is a major asset for any sonographer. Having taken the test, I would be impressed with any job candidate who holds ACS credentialing. The abilities to train staff, help achieve and maintain accreditation, as well as perform advanced cardiac imaging, are demonstrated by anyone holding the ACS credential. It would be an incredible asset for not only the employee but also the employer. Many labs are struggling with the increased skill demands on their sonographers. This is a great way to identify people with those skills and a wonderful tool for sonographers to use to prove that they have them." ♥

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