QARC
*QUALITY ASSURANCE
REVIEW CENTER*

FAQ's For Digital Data

What is a Secure FTP (SFTP) account and how do I get one?

Secure FTP Account

- A Secure FTP (SFTP) account allows your institution to send electronic digital data (exported from your treatment planning system) to QARC.

- Secure FTP (SFTP) uses the SSH network protocol and offers several advantages over FTP, including secure (encrypted) transport of usernames, passwords, and data, and compatibility with most firewall configurations.

- Only one account is issued to an institution and is used for all studies that require digital data to be sent to QARC.

Obtaining an SFTP Account on the QARC Server

- To obtain an SFTP on the QARC server, please fill out and submit the request form on the QARC website under the Alliance Foundation Trials – AFT16 link.

Please allow three business days for the account to be created. When the account is ready, you will be notified.

How do I connect to the QARC SFTP server?

QARC uses a Secure FTP server to receive digital imaging and treatment planning data from institutions participating in clinical trials.

What is my username and password?
- Please contact QARC (401-753-7600) to obtain your QARC SFTP account username and password. For security purposes we cannot provide passwords through email.

What is the server address?
- Digital data submissions use the QARC Secure FTP server, **sFTP.qarc.org** (IP address: **174.67.111.241**).

What SFTP Client Software do I need?

- SFTP client software, both commercial and open-source, is broadly available. Windows clients include WS_FTP Professional (commercial) and WinSCP (free/open-source). For Linux systems, both graphical (gftp) and command-line (sftp) programs are included with most distributions.
    - Please review Instructions for configuring SFTP clients on the QARC website under the Alliance Foundation Trials – AFT16 link for more information and detailed instructions.

- Please visit: *Uploading Digital Data to QARC via Secure FTP* (SFTP) on the QARC website under the Alliance Foundation Trials – AFT16 link for more detailed instructions.

What if I am having trouble connecting to the server?

- Problems in connecting to the QARC SFTP server may be caused by your institution's firewall configuration. An outbound connection from your computer to **TCP Port 22** on **host sFTP.qarc.org** (IP address: **174.67.111.241**) is required. (Although allowing such a connection is safe, it is sometimes disallowed by default.) Please consult your local firewall/network administrator.
- If problems persist, please contact QARC for assistance.

How do I notify QARC of my sFTP submission?

Send e-mail to sFTP@qarc.org to indicate that you have uploaded protocol case data. Please identify the protocol and case number for the submission as well as your contact information.

What data exchange formats does QARC accept?

Digital treatment planning data for this trial should be exported from a treatment planning system (TPS) and sent to QARC in **DICOM RT** format**.** Please refer to the table of Treatment Planning System Export Capability Per Modality.

What does a digital treatment plan consist of?

For each credentialing or protocol case submission, Digital Treatment Planning Data (in DICOM RT) is to be submitted via Secure FTP..

A complete DICOM RT data set would include:

- Planning CT image files
- Structure file (the file name often starts with the letters "RS")
- Plan file for each individual plan (the file name often starts with the letters "RP")
- Dose file for each plan (the file name often starts with the letters "RD"). Dose should be in absolute dose units (cGy or Gy). A composite dose distribution will be created at QARC for plans submitted separately.

Are DRRs and MU calculations included with the digital plan?

While these items are sometimes thought to be exported with the digital treatment planning files, they do not contain all the information needed to complete a Dosimetry review.

DRRs: For **DICOM RT** submissions, DRR's exported from the planning system are acceptable only if the MLC configuration has been "burned" into the DICOM image (e.g. Pinnacle). If this is not the case and DRR's are required, screenshots should be submitted.

MU Calculations: While some beam data is exported in the digital plan files, the treatment plan printout provides more comprehensive calculation data that is needed for review.