News Briefs

SNM Computer Council Plans Buyers' Guide

Officers of The Society of Nuclear Medicine's (SNM) Computer Council are meeting this month to outline a buyer's guide—a book the council plans to publish as an aid to SNM members purchasing computer systems. According to Jonathan Links, PhD, president-elect of the council, the book will cover how to define present and projected clinical and/or research needs, as well as how to select the most appropriate hardware, software, and vendor to meet those needs. ■

IOM Council on Health Care Technology

The Institute of Medicine (IOM) in the United States has appointed a new 15-member Council on Health Care Technology, complying with a mandate from the US Congress in the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Amendments of 1984, to promote the development and application of assessments of health care technologies and to review existing technologies to identify those that might be obsolete or inappropriately used.

"The proliferation of new technologies has affected the cost of health care and, in an effort to reduce costs without diminishing quality, have focused on the appropriate use of medical advances. However, those concerned have called for some formal structure to coordinate and enhance evaluations of the safety, efficacy, cost-effectiveness, and social implications of new and existing technologies," stated the IOM.

In compliance with the legislation, the council is directed to: serve as a clearing house for information on health care technologies and assessments; collect and analyze data on specific technologies; identify research and assessment needs; develop and evaluate assessment criteria and methods; promote education, training, and technical assistance; and stimulate, coordinate, and commission assessments.

Established in 1970 the IOM is a unit of the National Academy of Sciences (but with a separate membership of about 500 leaders in the medical community). The IOM includes biomedical sciences and health professions as well as related aspects of behavioral and social sciences, administration, law, physics, and engineering. The Institute is concerned with the protection and advancement of the health professions and sciences, and the promotion of health research and development.

Four members of The Society of Nuclear Medicine (SNM) have been elected to the IOM: S. James Adelstein, MD, PhD; Barbara J. McNeil, MD, PhD; Michael E. Phelps, PhD; and Henry N. Wagner, Jr., MD. ■

Osmium-191/Iridium-191m Generator Awarded Orphan Product Grant

S.T. Treves, MD, of Boston Children's Hospital, was recently awarded an orphan product grant from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to study radionuclide angiocardiography with iridium-191m. Dr. Treves, one of 21 recipients of grants totalling $2.8 million, said that the funding will be used to conduct clinical trials at five research centers in the United States: Baylor University, Boston Children's Hospital, Duke University, Massachusetts General Hospital, and the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA).

Dr. Treves and co-workers developed an osmium-191/iridium-191m generator, and he is seeking a commercial sponsor through the FDA's orphan products program (see *Newsline*, June 1986, pp. 743–744).

The FDA Office of Orphan Products Development oversees a program of incentives for commercial drug and device companies to manufacture medically needed but less profitable products. ■

Scintillation Camera Quality Assurance

A manual for quality assurance workshops on computer-interfaced scintillation cameras is now available from the US Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Center for Devices and Radiological Health. These workshops are designed to aid nuclear medicine technologists and other personnel in implementing quality assurance programs for this equipment in their departments.

Workshops cover data acquisition techniques and various aspects of hardware operation, as well as a short history of the use of computers for collecting scintillation camera data. Some quality assurance protocols are also presented.

The manual represents a portion of the work performed at Vanderbilt University, under an FDA contract, with Jon Erickson, PhD, as principle investigator.

["Workshop Manual for Computer-Interfaced Scintillation Camera Quality Assurance" (FDA 86-8268) is available from: Superintendent of Documents, US Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402, stock #017-015-00235-7, price $4.25.] ■