

SNM Leadership Update

We are looking for input on effective ways to implement our new strategic plan. Dr. Mathew Thakur, SNM vice president, Lyn Mehlberg, SNM president, Nanci Burchell, SNM president, and I recently attended a symposium sponsored by the American Society of Association Executives. The seminar focused on providing productive leadership through an efficient partnership between the elected officers and the executive officers of associations and societies.

This partnership is the key to successfully implementing the programs and initiatives requested by the membership. The elected and executive officers must work together to develop a vision for the organization and initiatives that will best serve its members. One of the topics at the symposium was how to develop a system of knowledge-based decision making so that the initiatives chosen will address the most critical needs of the organization and its members. To be successful, the initiatives need to be both practical and beneficial. Knowledge-based decision making starts with identifying and addressing the major issues that are facing the organization in a comprehensive and systematic way.

The new governance structure of the SNM defines the role of the House of Delegates (HOD) as the advisory body to the Board of Directors. The Board looks to the HOD to help identify and define the issues that are important to the membership. The HOD played a major role in formulating the SNM's most recent strategic plan. Recently, the BOD met to discuss how the SNM should deal with the global questions that are facing our profession—the "mega issues." The answers to these questions will guide the decisions that your leadership will make about the programs we will undertake and the policies we will implement in the next year.

Change in medicine is occurring at an ever-increasing rate. The advent of PET and PET/CT has profoundly impacted our profession in just a few short years. One of the mega issues that is currently under discussion is predicting how imaging will change in the next 10 years. Will FDG PET simply be another contrast agent for CT? Is PET/CT just the first of many innovations that will move imaging forward to a future where molecular imaging provides quantum advances in diagnosis and treatment? Can and how can the two very different worlds of anatomical and functional imaging be fused? Can the strengths of both disciplines be nurtured within the same community? What do the members of the SNM want the

future to look like? What actions can we take today that will increase the chances of achieving that future?

Another mega issue is membership demographics. Who will be practicing nuclear medicine in 5–10 years? What programs can we undertake now to be ready to provide value to future practitioners? And, of course, the question that every organization must ask if it expects to stay viable: what are the needs of the young professionals in our specialty, and how do we provide value for these young professionals?

International policy is another mega issue. The world continues to shrink. Knowledge can be rapidly disseminated. What efficiencies can be created by working on common problems on a global basis? The SNM has far more resources than any other nuclear medicine organization in the world. How should these resources be shared? How much sharing should be done for purely altruistic reasons?

We are also thinking about the kind of educational resources our members will need in the future. We need to consider how long PET education will continue to be a major need for our membership. What will the next major trend be and how can we keep ahead of the curve? We are asking whether the SNM should begin to develop programs to attract radiologists and other specialist.

Leveraging our outreach to other organizations is another mega topic. How should the SNM interact with patient advocacy organizations and programs? What other outreach activities would benefit our members and patients? Where do we stand and where do we want to stand in our relationships with other professional societies?

We are also examining our current government relations strategies to determine if they are still relevant and effective. What legislative and regulatory activities should we focus on in the coming year? Should we seek industry support for funding government relations activities?

Of course there are any number of smaller issues that the board is working on, but fulfilling our mission and serving our members and the health care community well depends on how we address and deal with the big questions of our time.



Virginia Pappas, CAE
SNM Executive Director