

## From the SNM President

**T**oward the end of every annual meeting of the SNM, there is a change of guard. The president of the previous year becomes the immediate past president, and the president-elect takes the helm as the president of this great organization. The president's responsibility is primarily fiduciary, but he or she must also take care of ongoing issues as well as create new initiatives that may substantially influence the future of the organization and better serve its membership. Twelve months may seem a long time, but in a democratic process that requires one to follow set channels this is a short period in which to bring new initiatives to conclusion and fruition. For example, as president-elect, I initiated the creation of a lifetime membership status in SNM, which is seemingly advantageous both to members and to the Society. It has been approved by the Board of Directors (BOD) at their June 2004 meeting but still requires a bylaws change, review by the membership, and House of Delegates (HOD) approval of revised bylaws before it can be implemented. The next scheduled HOD meeting is not until the SNM Mid-Winter Meeting in January 2005.

During my term as the president-elect, I initiated the National Radionuclide Availability Program. Now, as president I have initiated the Molecular Imaging Task Force and the International Task Force, obtained funds for regularly sending 25 copies of *The Journal of Nuclear Medicine* (*JNM*) to developing countries, and formed a Past Presidents Task Force as a think tank to support certain SNM activities. The initiatives identified through the SNM strategic plan will continue, and work will begin on the new goals identified by the BOD for this year. All these processes take time and effort to bring to fruition. None can be accomplished by one individual. It takes a great deal of input from many experts and a great deal of work from administrative staff. Ours is a voluntary organization. Demands on every expert's time are extremely heavy. Despite this, I feel fortunate that everyone I have asked to do something within his or her expertise for the SNM cause has not only agreed but also actively contributed toward accomplishing the goal. Our councils and committees are revitalized and have prepared their proactive agendas for the coming year. I am very pleased about this and am grateful to them. The society is composed of its membership, BOD, HOD, committees, councils, and chapters. Every single contribution in any shape or form, every abstract written, every paper published, and every nuclear medicine-related lecture given strengthens our society.

We are continuously improving our educational programs, perhaps one of the primary goals of our organization. The annual meeting in Philadelphia was a great success—socially, professionally and commercially. *JNM*, with an impact factor of 4.899, is now ranked third in the entire range of imaging periodicals. Our PET Learning Center and PET Center of Excellence activities are continuously expanding. As a result of our own efforts and those of other organizations, such as the Academy of Molecular Imaging, comprehensive reimbursement for Alzheimer's disease is now only a matter of time.

At the SNM annual meeting, the Food and Drug Administration team, led by Dr. George Miller, director of the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, outlined the revised and modified guidelines for Investigative New Drug applications, Radioactive Drug Research Committees, and a vision for accelerated approval for radiopharmaceuticals. Such approvals invigorate and encourage our industry and provide us with new means for improved patient care and for management of fatal diseases. Immediately after the SNM meeting, on July 2, the FDA announced a long-awaited approval of NeutroSpec (a  $^{99m}\text{Tc}$  murine monoclonal antibody that labels neutrophils in vivo) for imaging appendicitis.

In other news, the National Cancer Institute (NCI) is soliciting proposals for funding from small businesses to design targets to produce novel radionuclides for the creation of radiochemicals. The easier availability of such radionuclides as  $^{64}\text{Cu}$  or  $^{124}\text{I}$  could lead investigators to the development of novel radiopharmaceuticals for PET-based molecular imaging and for therapy. This NCI initiative is highly complementary to the current SNM program for national radionuclide availability and is one result of the joint SNM-NCI workshop held in September 2003. This noteworthy event is highly encouraging.

We must not, however, be self satisfied with these exciting events. We must continue to press on the initiatives we have undertaken and work hard to steer the SNM ship in the right direction in this ocean of competition and complexity.



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