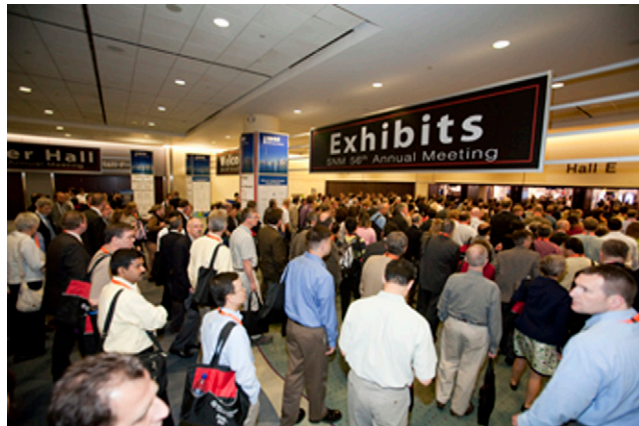


# International Interest Focuses on SNM 2009 Annual Meeting

The SNM Annual Meeting, held June 13–17 at Toronto's Metro Convention Center, was not only the site of innovative scientific, technical, and educational presentations on molecular imaging and therapy, but this year was the focus of international attention on continuing shortages of medical radioisotopes. Almost 4,000 nuclear medicine professionals (1,302 physicians, 724 scientists, 514 residents, 858 technologists, 238 technologist students, and 234 industry representatives) attended the world's largest molecular imaging and therapy conference, with an additional 1,750 exhibitors. These figures were comparable to corresponding 2008 figures, despite the triple challenge of difficult economic times, travel concerns related to the H1N1 virus, and isotope shortages creating scheduling problems in attendees' practices. The meeting featured more than 600 presentations in 88 scientific sessions and more than 1,000 scientific posters on topics ranging from the use of molecular imaging for basic science to the application of new technology in the clinical arena. Fourteen categorical courses were offered, along with 92 continuing education sessions, providing the broadest range of educational offerings to date at the meeting. The Third International Symposium on Radioimmunotherapy and Radiation Dosimetry was also held during the same week and in conjunction with the SNM Annual Meeting.

## All Eyes on Toronto and the SNM

Interest in this year's Annual Meeting was raised by SNM's public profile on the medical isotope shortage resulting from the shutdown of the Chalk River (Ontario, Canada) reactor and the lack of domestic isotope supplies in the United States. On June 15, immediate past president Robert W. Atcher, PhD, MBA, and 2009–2010 president Michael Graham, MD, PhD, hosted a press conference with other nuclear medicine leaders to stress the long-term effects of a shortage of isotopes on patient care. SNM also joined with the Nuclear Energy Institute and other organizations to issue a communiqué on the impending crisis. The document provided 10 background points and a commitment statement that issued challenges to political leaders, heads of state, regulators, industry, and the medical community to resolve the isotope supply and production issue. SNM leaders were interviewed widely in both the mainstream and trade media, including *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and several primetime news shows on television and radio. More than 150 reporters covered the press conference in person, by phone or by streaming broadcast, with a Twitter feed.



Thousands of nuclear medicine professionals attended SNM's Annual Meeting in Toronto.

## Honors and Awards

In addition to the induction of new SNM and SNMITS officers (see page 19N), sessions at the meeting featured the presentation of honors and awards too numerous to detail in this issue of Newsline. The Georg Charles de Hevesy Nuclear Pioneer Award and Aebersold Award for Outstanding Achievement in Basic Nuclear Medicine Science honorees are featured in special profiles on pages 22N and 23N. The SNM President Distinguished Educator Award was presented to S. James Adelstein, MD, PhD. Wynn A. Volkert, PhD, received the SNM Radiopharmaceutical Council's Michael J. Welch Award on June 14 at the Radiopharmacy Basic Science Summary Session. Jay A. Harold, MD, was honored with the Academic Council's



SNM's June 15 press conference drew more than 150 reporters and unprecedented media coverage, including primetime news shows on television and radio.

## McEwan Named Special Advisor

In the wake of continuing isotope shortages, Leona Aglukkaq, the Canadian Minister of Health, announced on June 14 the appointment of former SNM President Alexander (Sandy) J. McEwan, MD, MSc, as Special Advisor on Medical Isotopes. “Dr. McEwan is an internationally respected expert on nuclear medicine and also has a thorough understanding of the Canadian health care system, as well as Health Canada’s regulatory powers and responsibilities,” said Aglukkaq. “His unique combination of qualifications will be of great assistance to me and our partners as we continue to develop mitigation strategies and options to address the shortage.”

McEwan is director of oncologic imaging at Cross Cancer Institute (Edmonton, Alberta) and professor and chair of oncology at the University of Alberta Faculty of Medicine. A member of the Health Canada Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Medical Isotopes since the group was formed in 2007, he will work to provide on-the-ground updates on the isotope situation and assessments of the ways in which patients are affected. He will advise the health minister on the use of alternatives and mitigation strategies and on short- and long-term strategies for retaining a supply of medical isotopes. “These medical isotopes are crucial for supplying the best possible health care to Canadians,” said McEwan. “I am looking forward to working with the Minister of Health to ensure that the full range of options is considered and the best possible decisions are made to maintain proper isotope supplies.”

“On behalf of the nuclear medicine community, with whom we are working closely, we are pleased by the appointment of Dr. McEwan as Special Advisor on Medical Isotopes to the Minister of Health,” said Robert Ouellet, MD, president of the Canadian Medical Association. “The appointment recognizes the seriousness of the current situation and the importance of nuclear medicine in the provision of health care to Canadian patients. We look forward to continuing to work with the Minister, Dr. McEwan and governments to address the situation.”



Alexander (Sandy) J. McEwan, MD, MSc

Lifetime Achievement Award on June 14. At the SNM Business Meeting on June 15, SNM President Distinguished Service Awards were given to Frederic H. Fahey, DSc, John Pantaleo, Jr., and Homer A. Macapinlac, MD.

Several awards were presented in conjunction with named lectureships. James A. Patton, PhD, delivered the Academic Council’s Hal O. Anger Lecture on June 13. Darlene A. Metter, MD, and Henry D. Royal, MD, shared the Academic Council’s Tom Miller Memorial Award and lectureship on June 15. Nagara Tamaki, MD, gave the Herrmann Blumgart lecture and received the named award from the SNM Cardiovascular Council on June 15. Chester A. Mathis, PhD, received the Brain Imaging Council’s Kuhl–Lassen Award and delivered the accompanying lecture on June 16.

At its annual business meeting and a plenary session on June 14, the SNMTS named Aaron T. Scott, BS, CNMT, as Outstanding Technologist and William Hubble, MA, CNMT, as Outstanding Educator. Kathy Thomas, MHA, CNMT, was presented with the SNMTS Presidential Distinguished Service Award, and Sue Weiss, CNMT, was given the SNMTS Lifetime Achievement Award.

### Scientific Perspectives: Submolecular to Global

As always, the Annual Meeting featured plenary sessions, special presentations, awards and honors, and an array of breakthrough scientific announcements. “SNM’s 56th Annual Meeting brought to the forefront the many

advances that have made molecular imaging and nuclear medicine an indispensable tool for so many patients and physicians,” Graham told the press. “As researchers continue to learn from each other and build on the latest developments, these safe, noninvasive molecular imaging tools and procedures will one day make the promise of personalized medicine a reality for many patients.” Many of these latest developments were featured at special sessions in the meeting.

One highlight of the Annual Meeting’s first plenary session, held Sunday, June 14, was the Henry J. Wagner Jr. Lectureship, delivered by John F. Valliant, PhD, acting director of the McMaster Institute of Applied Radiation Sciences, McMaster University (Ontario, Canada). Valliant’s lecture, entitled “A Bridge Not Too Far: Linking Disciplines Through Molecular Imaging Probes,” described cutting-edge advances in chemistry for developing new radioactive probes and the ways in which these will be incorporated into molecular medicine.

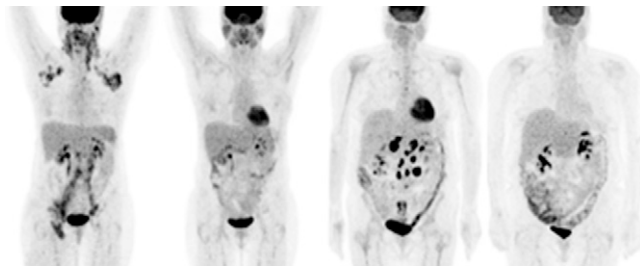
At the second plenary session on Monday, June 15, David W. Townsend, PhD, director of the Cancer Imaging Center and Tracer Development Program at the University of Tennessee Medical Center (Knoxville), presented the Cassen lectureship, entitled “Laying Ghosts to Rest: Adding Structure to Function.” The lecture explored the ways in which multimodality imaging devices offer a more complete picture of disease than any 2 modalities acquired separately,

leading to improvements in disease staging, restaging, treatment planning, and monitoring response to therapy.

One especially well-attended offering was the 2-part Symposium and Categorical Course on Radiopharmaceutical Dosing for Children, held on June 13 and 14. S. Ted Treves, MD, who organized the symposium, said that it was intended “to educate physicians on tools and methods that can be used to identify the lowest doses of radiopharmaceuticals that will still maintain the diagnostic value that physicians and patients need.” The categorical course focused on actions that physicians and technologists can take to minimize absorbed radiation dose from nuclear medicine and hybrid imaging procedures.

Working with Fahey as chair of the Scientific Program Committee, 9 scientific presenters summarized their findings in press releases and in 1-on-1 and group interviews with the scientific press. Among the findings that made news around the world were those from:

- Le Meunier et al. from Siemens Healthcare Molecular Imaging (Hoffman Estates, IL) and Cedars–Sinai Medical Center (Los Angeles, CA) on “Motion-frozen high-definition FDG cardiac PET.”
- Nawaz et al. from the University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia) and Thomas Jefferson University (Philadelphia) on “Diagnostic performance of FDG-PET in differentiating septic from aseptic painful knee prostheses.”
- Ravindranath et al. from Stony Brook University (NY) and Brookhaven National Laboratory (Upton, NY) on “Initial results from the BNL dedicated simultaneous PET-MRI breast imaging system prototype.”
- Van Holen et al. from Ghent University (Belgium) on “Combined high-resolution and high-sensitivity collimation provides better image quality in SPECT.”
- Tatsumi et al. from Osaka University Graduate School of Medicine and Medical Hospital (Japan) on “Simultaneous C-11 methionine (MET) PET and contrast-enhanced (CE) MRI rat imaging with an integrated PET/MRI system.”
- Frey et al. from the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor) on “PET neurochemical vs. clinical phenotypes in mild-early dementia.”
- Gupta et al. from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (New Delhi) and the Bhabha Atomic Research Center (Mumbai, India) on “Radionuclide therapy of basal cell carcinoma with phosphorus-32 skin patch.”
- Salomon et al. from Aachen University (Germany) and Philips Research (Aachen, Germany) on “Itera-



**SNM's 2009 Image of the Year shows the power of nuclear medicine to fight disease and manage patient care.**

tive generation of attenuation maps in TOF-PET/MR using consistency conditions.”

- Wild et al. from University Hospital Basel (Switzerland), Novartis Pharma, SP&A/Investigative and Regulatory Pathology (Basel, Switzerland), and the Institute of Transuranium Elements (Karlsruhe, Germany) on “An  $\alpha$ -particle emitting radiopeptide ( $^{213}\text{Bi}$ -DOTA-PESIN) for therapy of prostate cancer.”

### Image of the Year

Much attention focused, as it has for decades, on announcement of the SNM Image of the Year, selected by Henry N. Wagner, Jr., MD, as part of his annual Highlights Lecture reviewing scientific presentations at the meeting. This year's selection, unveiled at the June 15 general press conference, came from a scientific poster comparing  $^{131}\text{I}$ -tositumomab (Bexxar) with  $^{90}\text{Y}$ -ibritumomab (Zevalin) in therapy of low-grade refractory/relapsed non-Hodgkin lymphoma (NHL). Andrei H. Iagaru, MD, and colleagues from the Stanford University Medical Center (CA) prepared and presented the poster.

The image included before- and after-treatment PET scans from 1 patient treated with Bexxar and another treated with Zevalin (Fig. 5). Both patients showed no metabolically active NHL as early as 3 mo after treatment. “This image is really remarkable, because it shows 2 positive benefits of molecular imaging and nuclear medicine at the same time,” said Wagner “First, the PET scans demonstrate the power of radioimmunotherapy to fight advanced cases of NHL. In addition, this is proof of how PET scans are indispensable tools for managing patient care and determining whether treatments are working as intended.”

Additional information on the SNM Image of the Year will appear in Newsline next month as part of annual in-depth coverage of the Highlights Lecture.

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