

adequate and appropriate reimbursement for nuclear medicine procedures, and advance efforts to accelerate research. SNM leadership focused on the long-term goal of unifying and advancing molecular imaging and therapy.

The pages of Newsline also document the passing of time. In an announcement that marked the end of a grand tradition, Henry N. Wagner, Jr., MD, wrote in Newsline in December that his 33rd Highlights Lecture, delivered at the 2009 SNM Annual Meeting in Toronto, Canada, had been his last.

One of the most difficult tasks for the Newsline editor and consulting editor is the continuing challenge of adequately paying final tributes to respected colleagues and innovators in our field. This year was unfortunately no exception, with the untimely passing of physicians, technologists, and scientists who have been major contributors to the field of nuclear medicine. Perhaps the greatest tribute many of them can receive is to have their work in

nuclear medicine continue to be integral to clinical and research advances in medicine.

We move into 2010 with a mix of optimism—fueled by the great strides made in our field over the past few years—and caution—engendered by the uncertainties that surround us. Whatever the new year brings, we can be sure that surprises, advances, and setbacks will be included. We will continue to enjoy the challenge of providing summaries of and perspectives in the pages of Newsline and welcome the input and support of Newsline readers—for whom we wish the best for 2010!

*Conrad Nagle, MD
Editor, Newsline
Nancy Knight, PhD
Consulting Editor, Newsline*

Education, Reimbursement, Research: Tenets of SNM's Success

When I began my term as president of SNM in June, my vision for the society revolved around 3 main goals—to protect and expand reimbursement for nuclear medicine procedures, to provide high-quality member service by offering essential education, and to preserve and expand available funding to support nuclear medicine research and development. These goals are aligned with SNM's main mission to be the leader in unifying and advancing molecular imaging and therapy. Over the past 8 mo, SNM has made significant progress through initiatives designed to elevate the profile of molecular imaging among referring physicians, policymakers, the media, patient groups, and other stakeholders.

First, there is a pressing need to ensure that nuclear medicine physicians, scientists, and technologists receive standardized and continuing education so that their skills keep pace with the field. SNM is striving to raise the standards of education to new levels by working with the American College of Radiology and other organizations to create guidelines for training nuclear medicine physicians.

Second, with the pending legislation on health care reform, SNM remains a strong voice in advocating for the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to protect coverage of crucial diagnostic imaging tests for all patients. SNM also continues to demonstrate nuclear medicine's many benefits through the planning of cost effectiveness studies. This effort is expanding significantly in that we are organizing a workshop in comparative effectiveness research in molecular imaging in oncology and are actively

looking for funding opportunities to expand nuclear medicine research in this area.

Finally, research plays a critically important role in bridging from the present to the future. A prime example of SNM's commitment to moving molecular imaging and nuclear medicine forward is the development of the Clinical Trials Network. The network will ensure the standardization of imaging in clinical trials and lead to an expansion of our methodology in assessing response to therapy, particularly in early-phase clinical trials. It should also help speed approval of new radiopharmaceuticals, a process that has continued to be remarkably slow and remains a critical need for patients and other members of the molecular imaging community.

SNM as a whole is exploring the vast possibilities of molecular imaging, with the ultimate goal of expanding the ability of researchers and physicians to deliver on the promise of personalized medicine. It is important to recognize that every effort SNM makes toward advancing the field will help physicians, scientists, and technologists deliver better care to patients. By pursuing the goals of education, reimbursement, and research, SNM is poised to propel the profession to new heights.

*Michael M. Graham, PhD, MD
SNM President*



**Michael M. Graham,
PhD, MD**