

Strategic Plan Positions SNMMI for the Future: An Update

Last year, the society's board of directors approved a 3-year strategic plan that defined a clear-cut roadmap to address the various regulatory, economic, and other challenges facing nuclear medicine and molecular imaging. The plan's goals center around 5 key components:

- Advancing the development and approval of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging technologies;
- Facilitating and supporting the availability and clinical utilization of nuclear medicine molecular imaging technologies;
- Increasing appropriate utilization of radionuclide therapy;
- Advancing and promoting the quality, value, and safety of molecular imaging and nuclear medicine; and
- Supporting and enhancing the professional workforce and environment.

These objectives represent the need for bold actions, and since the plan's approval the society has made significant strides in implementing various tactics to achieve these goals.

Advancing the development and approval of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging technologies is of critical importance to the field, and the society has addressed that challenge through several initiatives, including the formation of the FDA Task Force, which is tasked with creating a more efficient and timely approval process for new and non-proprietary radiotracers and radiotherapeutics. SNMMI is an integral part of the Amyloid Imaging Coverage with Evidence Development Working Group, working to draft clinical trial proposals to meet CMS's requirements. In addition, SNMMI continues to work with the National Nuclear Security Administration to advance development of a domestic isotope supply.

Through interactions with various government stakeholders, the society is making advances in advocating for regulatory approval and reimbursement for radionuclide therapy. In partnership with the National Cancer Institute (NCI), the society organized a workshop to discuss current and potential applications of targeted radionuclide therapy for treatment of hematologic and solid cancers. The workshop highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of targeted radionuclide therapy as perceived by the oncology, radiation therapy, imaging, and basic science communities as well as potential opportunities for future research in this arena. Both the NCI and SNMMI believe that targeted radionuclide therapy is important in patient care and may be underutilized in the medical community, and a second workshop is planned to address these issues in 2015.

The quality, value, and safety agenda of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging is being championed in several ways. The society has created a new department, Evidence and

Quality, and hired staff to support the efforts of the new Guidance Oversight Committee (GOC) and Quality Committee (QAC). Chaired by Kevin Donohoe, MD, the GOC will evaluate appropriate use criteria. It will also review existing clinical practice guidelines for omissions specific to nuclear medicine use criteria. The QAC, chaired by George Segall, MD, is exploring the relationship between quality and nuclear medicine. This is intended to increase the value nuclear physicians deliver to various stakeholders.

Other actions to support this overarching objective include the society's ongoing role in providing testimony and comments to various government entities. Most recently, the society provided comments to the FDA on improving the quality of Abbreviated New Drug Application submissions.

The society has made substantial infrastructure investments to support and enhance the professional workforce and environment. The society's website has been redesigned so that members and other visitors can easily access the information they need. More important, the website's design allows us to push out information quickly to ensure that members have the most up-to-date information. Enhancing the professional workforce includes maintaining strong working relationships with other professional organizations, and the society continues to achieve success with that strategy. SNMMI and the European Association of Nuclear Medicine (EANM) recently published a consensus guideline on pediatric radiopharmaceutical dose administration, the result of the efforts of a working group of the SNMMI and the EANM that met to study harmonizing these guidelines, identify differences between the 2, and suggest changes to both to achieve a level of harmonization.

The regulatory and economic issues facing nuclear medicine and molecular imaging require a daring and comprehensive plan. However, it is important that strategic plans provide flexibility so that organizations can adapt the plan to address emerging challenges. Within the past 6 months, there have been volatile external events—industry consolidation and radiopharmaceutical price increases to name only 2—and at its upcoming meeting the board of directors will be reviewing the strategic plan and determining whether the plan needs to address different priorities.



Virginia Pappas, CAE

*Virginia Pappas, CAE
SNMMI CEO*