

Implementing the Value Initiative

Bennett S. Greenspan, MD, MS, SNMMI President

It has been my great honor to serve as president of SNMMI this past year! I have relied on the efforts of so many in the society, and, with their help, we have made progress on many fronts in the implementation of our Value Initiative (VI) and strategic plan—taking steps to strengthen and advance the field of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging. Here are highlights in each of the Value Initiative domains.

Quality of Practice (Chair: Gary L. Dillehay, MD): To ensure high-quality, value-driven, patient-centered care, SNMMI is collaborating with experts representing multiple organizations to develop appropriate use criteria (AUC) for diagnostic and therapeutic procedures, 5 of which are expected to be completed in 2018. For effective implementation of the AUC, the society has contracted with several clinical decision support platforms, including the National Decision Support Company's CareSelect system and Stanson Health. We are also updating our procedure standards and are working with the European Association of Nuclear Medicine (EANM) and other organizations as appropriate on joint guidance documents to ensure uniform best-practice guidelines.

Research and Discovery (Chair: Richard L. Wahl, MD): To encourage and promote research in the field, SNMMI is developing a broad-based vision document outlining the roles of nuclear medicine imaging and therapy in cancer, neurology, and other diseases with unmet needs. This document will be the basis for further plans, which in turn will be supported by focused grant applications and fundraising. To improve the quality of nuclear medicine trials and literature, the editors of *The Journal of Nuclear Medicine* are supporting a new checklist of criteria to be included in submitted papers and articles. Educational sessions and template protocols for study design are also being developed.

Workforce Pipeline and Life-Long Learning (Chair: Frederick D. Grant, MD): To retain and expand the diverse pool of qualified professionals working in the field, SNMMI has a strong focus on attracting new residents, which has already produced results: resident members have increased 3-fold over last year. An aggressive outreach program emphasizes the value of membership for residents, including networking, career services, and mentoring. A new Mentor Platform will soon launch that will recruit and match mentors with young students and professionals in the field. New social and networking activities for residents and students at the SNMMI Annual Meeting will also help get the mentoring program underway.

Advocacy (Chair: Munir Ghesani, MD): In March, members of SNMMI's Patient Advocacy Advisory Board participated in a Capitol Hill fly-in to urge support for a bill that would require the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to reclassify high-value radiopharmaceuticals as drugs—providing improved reimbursement so patients will have access. SNMMI advocates for increased National Institutes of Health funding of nuclear medicine research, as well as for federal funding for development of new ^{99}Mo sources. The society continues work to support development of domestic sources of ^{99}Mo that do not require the use of highly enriched uranium. SNMMI also successfully encouraged the U.S. Pharmacopeia to develop standards for compounding of radiopharmaceuticals. For technologists, SNMMI is working at the state level with its local Technologist Advocacy Group representatives on advocacy regarding legislation/regulations to require or modify their licensure.

Outreach (Chair: Vasken Dilsizian, MD): In patient outreach, the Patient Advocacy Advisory Board is expanding, with the latest addition a representative of the Susan G. Komen organization. SNMMI outreach working groups are collaborating with patient advocacy organizations on diverse projects, including creating and updating factsheets, creating "What to Expect" videos for patients undergoing brain scans, and funding/planning events. A plan is also being developed for outreach at the chapter level to engage local and regional patient groups. We are also working on increasing referring physicians' awareness of new radiopharmaceuticals through events, meeting sessions, and educational materials. In addition, we have contacted societies that collaborated on AUC development for help disseminating these to their members.

Organizational Strength and Stability: Members are the foundation of the society, and we are strengthening membership through more personal outreach, including initiatives focused on medical students and residents, with a dedicated website and a new in-training job-posting section in the Career Center. A new online community, SNMMI Connect, will bring together colleagues from around the globe to network in forums dedicated to specific interests. Through the new Value Initiative Industry Alliance, SNMMI is working with members of the corporate



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community who will help shape the field's future by providing funding support, strategic industry guidance, and collaborative knowledge sharing. Finally, to ensure effectiveness, SNMMI is conducting ongoing evaluations of what is working and where strategies and resources need to shift.

I sincerely thank the Value Initiative domain chairs and all those working with them for accomplishments to date and ongoing efforts!

This year we also formed 2 new committees. The first, under the Therapy Center of Excellence, is the Committee on Training and Education for Competence in Radionuclide Therapy. Its members are working on a guidance document that will be sent to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Advisory Committee on the Medical Uses of Isotopes this summer.

The second new committee tackles a long-standing controversial issue. It will evaluate the evidence for and against the linear no-threshold hypothesis on risks of low-level radiation exposure. This is a collaborative endeavor. So far, we are working with representatives of the American Association of Physicists in Medicine, American Society for Radiation Oncology, and the Health Physics Society.

During the past year, it was a special joy to meet and work with colleagues around the globe on common issues to advance our field. In October 2017, I attended the Asia Oceania Congress of Nuclear Medicine and Biology in Yokohama, Japan, and signed a 3-year memorandum of understanding (MOU) between SNMMI and the Japanese Society of Nuclear Medicine. That same month, I attended

the EANM annual meeting in Vienna, Austria, and signed an MOU with the EANM. I also signed an MOU with the International Atomic Energy Agency for collaboration on projects, including educational activities and quality measures. More recently, I attended a meeting in Martinique, where SNMMI, EANM, the European Thyroid Association, and the American Thyroid Association met to address collaborating on issues related to the care of patients with thyroid cancer, with particular focus on radioactive iodine therapy.

It has truly been a privilege to serve SNMMI as president. I extend a warm thank you to all who have volunteered and helped advance the many initiatives of the society! In particular, I would like to thank Satoshi Minoshima, MD, PhD; Vasken Dilsizian, MD; Sally Schwarz, MS; and Virginia Pappas, CAE, in the SNMMI leadership team for providing valuable advice during my term. It has also been a great pleasure to work with Michael Middleton, MD; Katherine Zukotynski, MD; Kathy Krisak, BS, CNMT; and Norman Bolus, MSPH, CNMT, in the executive team. My thanks also go to the SNMMI Board of Directors and the staff for their assistance. And last, but certainly not least, my sincere thanks to my wife for her understanding and support.

As I now turn the leadership over to Dr. Minoshima, I am optimistic about a future in which molecular imaging and diagnostic and therapeutic nuclear medicine are fully recognized for their roles in providing high quality, precision care, and improving patients' lives.

Aria Razmaria, MD, Awarded 2018 Henkin Fellowship

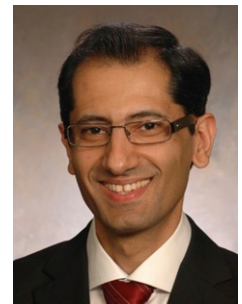
SNMMI and the Education and Research Foundation for Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging announced on April 11 that Aria Razmaria, MD, is the recipient of the 2018 Robert E. Henkin Government Relations Fellowship. Each year, fellowship recipients travel to Washington, DC, and spend a week with SNMMI staff, visiting Congress, federal agencies, and other medical societies. Throughout the visit, fellows learn about ways in which federal legislative and regulatory processes affect nuclear medicine and molecular imaging. The program is designed for young professionals, defined as residents or fellows (physicians, scientists, or technologists) who have completed training within the last 10 years.

Dr. Razmaria is a graduate of the Medical University of Vienna (Austria). After completion of training in family medicine and urology, he spent several years in clinical research at the University of Chicago (IL), focusing on prostate cancer treatment outcomes. He is pursuing his training in nuclear medicine at the University of California

Los Angeles Medical Center and the Greater Los Angeles Veterans Affairs Healthcare System. He has presented his research at national and international venues and has authored more than 35 peer-reviewed publications and book chapters. He currently serves on the board of directors of the Nuclear Medicine Resident/Fellow Organization (NMRO), is the nuclear medicine resident delegate to the American Medical Association, and is the editor of the NMRO

newsletter *Scintillator*. Dr. Razmaria's research interests are in innovative targeted molecular imaging and therapeutic agents for prostate cancer. He is also engaged in advocacy and public representation of the field of nuclear medicine.

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Aria Razmaria, MD