
COMMENTARY

UNITY IN EUROPEAN NUCLEAR MEDICINE

For too many years, the European nuclear medicine community has been fragmented by the existence of two European societies with multiple national societies. By the end of the European Nuclear Medicine Congress 1985 in London, both scientist and commercial participants agreed that a single society, the European Association of Nuclear Medicine, was now a necessity rather than a hope. Once the legal formalities have been sorted out, the new association should be a



thriving focus for new ideas and innovations.

The Society of Nuclear Medicine—Europe (SNME) was founded in 1964 and until recently has been essentially a German-oriented organization. The meetings have been of excellent scientific quality, but in general were attended by German-speaking scientists oriented toward German-based research. The European Nuclear Medicine Society

(ENMS) was conceived in 1972 to encourage the cooperation between the Eastern- and Western-Bloc scientists. Although the ENMS operated on the truly democratic principle of representative delegates from each nation, in practice the original idea has not worked well because of the difficulty encountered by nondelegate scientists in visiting Western Europe.

Mr. Edward Heath, MP, who served as the British Prime Minister from 1970 to 1974, gave the opening address at the Congress in which he urged nuclear medicine scientists to unify as one European cooperative body. Mr. Heath's advice seemed quite appropriate since he played a leading part in the negotiations to include Britain in the European Economic Community. A truly international spirit prevailed during the Congress, which was exemplified at the traditional banquet and dance attended by over 500 registrants. The participation in this Congress exceeded all expectations, and bodes well for the future of a unified nuclear medicine society in Europe.

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gional cerebral blood flow (A1). Biodistribution studies show that the agent crosses the blood-brain barrier, and its retention of activity represents a "major improvement" over other lipophilic technetium-99m tracers, which exhibit rapid washout.

Cerebrovascular disease

At the Middlesex Hospital in London, England, Dr. Peter J. Ell et. al. evaluated technetium-99m HMPAO in patients with established stroke and in normal subjects (A2). The group found that SPECT imaging with the new radiopharmaceutical demonstrates good quality images compared to iodine-123 IMP and x-ray computed tomography (CT).

Prof. Dr. Wolfram H. Knapp of the Institut für Nuklearmedizin in Heidelberg, Germany, presented a SPECT imaging study to determine the blood flow-to-volume ratio in patients with cerebrovascular disease (A112). The group, which included investigators from the Neurologische Universitätsklinik in Heidelberg and the Herzzentrum Nordrhein-Westfalen in Bad Oeynhausen, Germany, reported that their findings mirror the characteristics of cerebral blood flow autoregulation in patients with decreased arterial perfusion pressure.

Prof. Dr. Udalrich Buell reported work done at the University of Munich, Germany, on a comparison of SPECT and nuclear magnetic resonance imaging (NMRI) to quantify

cerebrovascular disease (A54). The group found that NMRI may be used to examine this disease, and was found to be most sensitive in detecting altered cerebral areas. SPECT with lipophilic tracers, however, was superior in demonstrating the size of the low-flow areas.

In another study from the University of Munich, Wolfgang Krappel et. al. studied 24 patients with cerebrovascular disease to determine an optimum time frame wherein cerebral IMP distribution reflects regional cerebral blood flow, using xenon-133 gas studies as a reference (A56). The group found that cerebral IMP uptake and distribution represent regional cerebral blood flow only during the

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