"I recognized the need for physicians who use our studies, and who are too busy to keep up with the current nuclear medicine literature, to get information on new procedures."

Dr. Matin believes that his department promotes the value of nuclear medicine studies by providing clear and descriptive reports.

To emphasize the importance of quality diagnostic reports, Dr. Matin is now considering creating a monograph of model reports to serve as examples for other nuclear medicine departments.

These model reports would cover different problems arising with various scans and standard ways to answer those problems.

Normal scan reports would also be included in the monograph. For example, "it's not enough to write 'normal bone scan' for a patient with a suspected wrist fracture," said Dr. Matin. "The report should also state 'no evidence of wrist fracture,'" he added.

Clinical updates

Another effort to reach out to referring physicians began in June 1983 when Walter DiGiulio, MD, former director of the nuclear medicine department at St. John Hospital in Detroit, had the idea for "Clinical Nuclear Medicine Updates for Referring Physicians."

"I recognized the need for physicians who use our studies, and who are too busy to keep up with the current nuclear medicine literature, to get information on new procedures," said Dr. DiGiulio, who was also president of the Society's Central Chapter which publishes the updates.

Consisting of 16 brief summaries of radionuclide studies for various organ systems and disease states, the Clinical Updates also include general introductions to radiation and nuclear medicine.

New topics, contributed by Central Chapter members, are published every few months and sent to about 1,800 subscribers.

"Several institutions have ordered 300 to 500 complete sets of Clinical Updates to distribute to physicians, medical technologists, nurses, and patients," said Deborah A. Churan, executive director of the Central Chapter.

[For more information, contact the Central Chapter, Society of Nuclear Medicine, 134 Lincoln Parkway, Crystal Lake, IL 60014 (815) 459-6884.]

VA MEDICAL DIRECTOR RESPONDS TO SNM

John W. Ditzler, MD, chief medical director at the Veterans Administration (VA) Central Office in Washington, DC, responded in a letter dated May 17 to the Society's request for a reconsideration of his decision to eliminate the position of Director of the VA Central Office Nuclear Medicine Service, currently held by James J. Smith, MD (see Newsline, June 1985, pp. 553-554).

"The technologic advances in both nuclear medicine and radiology achieved imaging technology widely used in both diagnosis and treatment. Opportunities for integration of this new technology, which cuts across both of these clinical disciplines, abound and will doubtless expand as the technology advances.

"Several medical schools and/or major medical centers have already established Departments of Imaging. We need to keep both scientific advancements and quality-driven but cost-effective care in harmony.

"It was my desire and intent to keep VA medicine abreast of this technologic advance. However, I have been persuaded to move in a more deliberate fashion to ensure objective assessment and an orderly transition.

Interim basis

"I will therefore continue separate Nuclear Medicine and Radiology Services on an interim basis. I should note here that the integration of the management of these companion clinical services was only intended at the Central Office level. Decisions regarding integration at the individual medical center level would be at the discretion of each medical center..." said Dr. Ditzler.

The Society's Board of Trustees passed a resolution during its meeting in Houston, TX, on June 1, calling for the Society to communicate to the VA that nuclear medicine and radiology should be maintained as separate services within the VA hospital system and Central Office."