
COMMENTARY

LINES FROM THE PRESIDENT: SHOULD THE SNM PRESIDENCY BE A TWO-YEAR TERM?

The Society of Nuclear Medicine (SNM) was founded as a scientific organization with a major portion of its budget directed toward the science of nuclear



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medicine, through *The Journal of Nuclear Medicine* and the SNM Annual Meeting. Nevertheless, in reality, the principle efforts of its leadership, particularly the President, are concentrated to a greater degree on non-scientific matters that determine how the specialty of nuclear medicine is perceived and how it will fare in future medical practice.

I was somewhat surprised when, on becoming President, I was suddenly confronted with myriad problems that were, for the most part, not scientific but had important, long range implications and required immediate attention. I had thought that the year of being President-Elect would more than adequately prepare me for the Presidency, but a smooth transition was virtually impossible, and I can only hope that any errors I may have made will not be lasting. Many of the objectives that I had planned to pursue were limited by inherited ongoing activities of the Society and unanticipated matters that arose and had to be addressed.

With the Nuclear Regulatory Commission considering whether to change regulations governing how nuclear medicine is practiced and the potential restructuring of the Food and Drug Administration into, what I hope is, a more efficient and responsive agency, the non-scientific activities of the Presidential office will increase. Other issues, such as technologist, scientist, and physician recruitment and training, the continuing decrease in radionuclide and radiopharmaceutical suppliers, the vagaries of nuclear medicine reimbursement, particularly of advanced technology, such as positron emission tomography, and efforts to gain recognition of nuclear medicine as a distinct and unique medical specialty also increase the demands on the President.

It's every President's desire to do something meaningful for the Society, but it's often difficult to accomplish much in a one-year term. The Society has recognized that some

positions, such as the Scientific and General Program Chairmanships, are too important to change annually. Why not consider such a proposal for the SNM Presidency?

In addition, several chapters have adopted a two-year term for the office of President. Although the principal reason for the chapters to have two-year Presidencies was motivated by a limited pool of Presidential candidates, this would not be the reason for the Society to adopt such a policy. I am very aware of the commitment a two-year Presidency places on the candidate. I believe, however, that the potential advantages for the Society outweigh the disadvantages, as long as the two-year term does not discourage or limit the pool of Presidential candidates. The President would have the opportunity to initiate and then observe the fulfillment of specific objectives during his or her incumbency. I can also envision better utilization of the Vice President and a more effective tutelage of the President-Elect as the President becomes more experienced, during his second year.

A change in the election of the President would by necessity change the election of the Vice-President and the President-Elect to every other year. The election process for the new Board of Trustees members and the other elected positions would not have to change. Besides changing the By-Laws to accommodate the two-year Presidential term, some changes will also have to be made in the composition of certain standing committees and subcommittees. The process would actually result in some cost saving for the Society since the election would be every other year and should stimulate greater interest and closer scrutiny of candidates and their campaign rhetoric while they contend for the Presidency.

In this, my last editorial, I offer this proposal only as a suggestion for your consideration. I hope it reflects the dynamics of the times and the continuing need for our Society to stay relevant in a changing scientific and medical environment. The Society's governance periodically needs re-examination and adjustment. I sincerely appreciate having been given the opportunity to serve SNM as President. I feel I have been extremely fortunate to be there as the Society begins the next decade with a new executive director, an enthusiastic office staff, and our second scintillating distaff President.

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