

SNM Leadership Triumvirate: Three-Year Vision for the Future of the Society



Peter T. Kirchner,
MD



Michael D. Devous,
PhD



H. William Strauss,
MD

Last year the Society of Nuclear Medicine (SNM) implemented a new by-law which expanded the position of Vice President-Elect to become a three-year track to the Presidency. This will enable leadership to have a longer term view of the future. *SourceLine* went to the three newly installed leaders, President Peter T. Kirchner, MD; President-Elect Michael D. Devous, PhD; and Vice President-Elect H. William Strauss, MD, to find out their plans for the next three years.

Adding a new position into the hands of leadership has already served as a positive move, according to Devous. "As policy issues are discussed, such as health care reform and government relation topics, Dr. Kirchner has chosen to include us in every step of the decision-making process," he said. "This type of Presidency will ensure that policies are maintained for at

least three years, thus creating a much needed consistency for the Society," Devous said.

All three leaders come from varied backgrounds that complement each other and provide balanced goals for the Society. Kirchner is a professor of radiology and medicine and director of the nuclear medicine division at the University of Iowa and has taken an active leadership role in the Society for years. As a scientist of clinical research for 15 years, Devous is particularly sensitive to the needs of the scientist members; with his new appointment to chair an FDA advisory committee, he will also have a foothold in the regulatory end of the industry. Strauss brings another important element to the leadership team as former editor-in-chief of *The Journal of Nuclear Medicine*. He has kept abreast of the changing role of the nuclear medicine research field and is able to lead the Society into the technological future. Moreover all three leaders have a common goal: integration for nuclear medicine, which is the thrust behind the following priorities on the top of their list.

The ACNP/SNM Government Relations Office

Kirchner is following in the footsteps of past SNM President James J. Conway, MD, in continuing the efforts to integrate activities of the SNM and the American College of Nuclear Physicians (ACNP). For instance, the ACNP/SNM joint government relations committee, which was formed in June, has been meeting regularly to discuss federal reimbursement, isotope

availability, and Nuclear Regulatory Commission issues. The committee receives support from the new government relations office, located at the SNM headquarters in Reston, VA. "The need to increase integration of similar ACNP and SNM activities will remain a major focus of our attention," Kirchner said. He emphasized that these joint activities are particularly important in the area of government affairs in order to respond to the rising challenges to the nuclear medicine specialty.

SNM PRESIDENTS HONORED

Honoris Causa Awarded to Strauss

H. William Strauss, MD, Vice-President-Elect of the SNM and former editor of *The Journal of Nuclear Medicine* received an honorary doctorate from the Autonomous University of Barcelona in May of 1995. The degree was awarded in recognition of Strauss' major contribution to research and diagnosis in cardiovascular medicine.

The ceremony took place in the main hall of the Hospital Sant Pau in Barcelona, Spain. The session, chaired by the university president along with the academic authorities of the faculty of medicine, was attended by distinguished nuclear medicine physicians and cardiologists from Spain and by several of Strauss's colleagues who traveled from various countries to attend the event. Strauss gave a lecture on the history of cardiovascular nuclear medicine.

Devous Chosen to Head FDA Advisory Committee

Michael D. Devous, PhD, President-Elect of the SNM, was appointed chairman of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's advisory committee on medical imaging drugs this past July. Devous, an associate professor of radiology at UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, TX will serve as committee chairman for two years.

Devous, who has a PhD in physics along with 15 years of clinical research background, said he is excited to learn about the regulatory side of nuclear medicine. "My science and clinical background helps me bridge the gap between those who do basic science (physics, chemistry, biology) and those who do clinical practice. And most of the time I can understand and relate to both views," Devous said.

A New Radiopharmaceutical Commission

Another project kicked off by Conway and developed by Kirchner is a radiopharmaceutical commission within the Society, similar to the Health Care Policy Commission. This new commission will seek to integrate various Society and industry activities relating to radiopharmaceutical development, use and regulation. It will be established by the Society's Mid-Winter Meeting.

Integration with Industry and Other Societies

At the Society's recent Annual Meeting in June, SNM leadership held a "community-wide" meeting consisting of 30 leaders representing the nuclear medicine industry and various nuclear medicine organizations. The immediate outcome: the formation of a five-person committee to set community-wide priorities for the nuclear medicine field. The committee includes representatives from the ACNP, the American Society of Nuclear Cardiology, the Radiopharmaceutical Industry, the Instrumentation Industry and SNM.

Devous, who serves as the chairman of this new committee, said the Society has a huge challenge with health care reform issues and is pushing to address not only the short-term clinical problems, but the long-term outlook for nuclear medicine research. "I am a strong believer that the Society needs a leader who will help integrate the needs of the diverse community," Devous said. The goal of this new committee is to address the common needs of nuclear medicine providers and to attack these issues as a unified community.

The Commission on the Health Care Policy (CHCP)

As the newly appointed chair of the CHCP, Strauss plans to emphasize the need for increased communication with other Society committees and nuclear medicine organizations. This type of collaboration will avoid duplication of efforts and provide mutual support among various nuclear medicine organizations, Kirchner said.

Other goals on the top of leadership's agenda include: enhancing the value of SNM membership by increasing the amount of benefits members receive and reducing the number of Society committees to streamline the work.

How are the new leaders working together?

Kirchner: We differ little on our approaches to solving problems.

Devous: We are not spending our time resolving conflicts amongst each other, rather we are spending our time refining decisions and policies.

Strauss: Our ideas and experience complement each other.

UPDATE ON THE 43RD ANNUAL MEETING

On Saturday July 21, the Technical Exhibits Committee visited the Colorado Convention Center in Denver, the site of the 43rd Annual Meeting which will be held on June 2-6, 1996.

The 1996 Plenary Session will be held in the convention center's ballroom, which will be subdivided into two rooms for continuing medical education (CME) courses. The CME courses will feature more "Read with the Experts" sessions with interactive audience response systems. The eight rooms for oral abstract presentations will each have seating capacity for more than 250 participants. This year the co-moderator will have control of the level of lighting before, during and after each presentation. The deadline for abstract submissions is January 9, 1996.

—Paul H. Murphy, PhD
General Program Chair

SNM NETWORK NEWS

The Commission on Health Care Policy is now offering a free subscription of SNM Network News to all SNM members. This monthly health policy publication contains information on federal and state health reform, managed care, outcomes research and Commission activities. If you are interested in receiving a complimentary subscription, please contact Joanna Wilson at (703) 708-9000, ext. 250.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON THE NEW CODATA STUDY

As the Internet comes into widespread use in the research community, the National Research Council has organized a study, chaired by R. Stephen Berry, PhD, of the University of Chicago, to investigate any barriers that may impede the international flow of scientific data. The study is being performed under the review of the U.S. National Committee for Codata—the committee on Data for Science and Technology. The goal is to help improve access to scientific data and services, focusing on the

dispersal of information over the Internet.

The study committee is requesting information on: barriers to data access, pricing of data, protection of intellectual property, problems of less developed countries, scientific data for global problems, the use of electronic networks and other technical issues. Anyone interested in providing views to the study committee should respond to the public inquiry by January 31, 1996, which can be found on Codata's World Wide Web Home Page

(located at <http://www.cisti.nrc.ca/codata/welcome.html>). For more information about the study contact: Paul F. Uhler, Director, USNC/CODATA, National Research Council, 2101 Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20418. Phone: (202) 334-3061. Fax: (202) 334-2154. Study results, aimed for completion in the summer of 1996, will be distributed to the federal government and scientific community, offering recommendations that could help overcome barriers to access internationally.