

PUBLIC AFFAIRS UPDATE



Second Roadshow Performs to Full House

The word seems to be getting out that if you have any questions on coding, the Roadshow Seminar on Coding and

Reimbursement is not to be missed—and everyone seems to have questions about codes. The San Francisco meeting is a good example. An empty seat was hard to find, and comments from those attending indicate that Kenneth A. McKusick, MD, Lynne Roy, CNMT, and William Uffelman, Director of SNM Public Affairs, did a super job breaking down the difficult topics of correct coding, ambulatory payment codes, and fraud and abuse.

The next Roadshow will pull into Williamsburg, VA, on April 13, 2000. If you would like more information, contact Amanda Sullivan at 703-708-9000, ext. 1255.

SNM Comments on NRC Policy Guide

In a letter to Dr. Richard Meserve, Chairman of the NRC, SNM stated that “Policy and Guidance Directive PG 83-2, Rev.1, Renewal of Materials Licenses” appears to represent a “desk drawer” rule.

This policy guide was first brought to our attention when Carol Marcus, MD, came across a notice about it on the Agreement State Web page. When she attempted to open the document, a password was required. The Society tried unsuccessfully to obtain the document from the NRC. We even filed a request under the Freedom of Information Act, but were denied access. Eventually, we received a copy through alternative means, and, on review, we found this document to be in fact a “desk drawer” rule: one that creates a regulation without going through the routine process of review and commentary by the public.

The policy document creates a “two-tiered” licensing policy. Under this system, applicants with good performance ratings are given 10-year licenses, and applicants identified by NRC as having programmatic weakness are licensed for shorter periods. It is the Society’s belief that applicants

are either qualified for licenses or they are not. A shorter term in no way ensures that the licensee will carry out tasks any more carefully than if given the full-term license. Should an incident occur from one of the suspect licensees, it will not only adversely affect that one weak program but the entire nuclear medicine community.

To view the letter in its entirety, visit the SNM website at www.snm.org or contact the Public Affairs Department at 703-708-9000.

Lung Phantoms Now Available

IQ and SNM’s Practitioner Acquisition Assessment Program (PAAP) are proud to announce the release of the newest phantom. With this 3-D Lung Perfusion Study, you can detect the location, extent, and significance of simulated perfusion abnormalities. It is an excellent tool to assess the ability of your nuclear medicine staff and equipment.

Those who purchase the phantom are encouraged to send their results back to the Society. SNM will then send you a report showing your confidential results as they compare with other participants as a whole. VOICE credit is available for nuclear medicine technologists.

The phantom can be purchased by SNM members for \$625.00 and by nonmembers for \$695.00. There will be a \$35.00 shipping fee. To learn more about this program and to purchase your phantom, contact Sandra Griffith, Associate Director of Health Care Policy, at 703-708-9000, ext. 1321.

Documents Available

1. Letter to Meserve, NRC, on Policy Guide
2. SNM Comment Letter on Supervision
3. SNM Comment Letter on HCFA’s Physician Payment Schedule
4. ACNP/SNM Comments on Scientech Study
5. HCFA Final Rule on RVU Fee Schedule for 2000
6. AMA Summary of RVU Changes
7. APC Taskforce Memo on HOPPS

—William Uffelman and Amanda Sullivan