



LETTERS

Editor's note: A letter to the Newsline editor from Dr. Reba was published in the March 2000 issue of the Journal of Nuclear Medicine with changes that were made without the author's knowledge or permission. The changes included inaccuracies for which Dr. Reba has no responsibility and for which the editor of Newsline apologizes. The correct letter is reprinted here in its entirety.

TO THE NEWSLINE EDITOR: The brief note in Newsline (*J Nucl Med.* 1999;40[12]:24N) highlighting Dr. Michael J. Welch's election to the Institute of Medicine (IOM) omitted naming several Society members who have achieved this distinction. And a noteworthy distinction it is.

Dr. Welch, one of 55 new members elected to the Institute of Medicine (IOM), raised the total active membership to only 588. Candidates are chosen for their major contributions to health and medicine or to related fields. The private, nonprofit organizations that make up the National Academies, the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), the IOM, and the National Academy of Engineering (NAE), work under an 1863 congressional charter. Election is both an honor and an obligation to work on behalf of the organization in its governance and studies providing independent advice to Congress

and to government departments and agencies to help focus their efforts toward achieving realistic national needs on matters of science, technology, and medicine.

A more complete list of SNM scientist members who have been elected to the National Academies includes S.J. Adelstein (IOM), T.F. Budinger (IOM and NAE), D.E. Kuhl (IOM), B.J. McNeil (IOM), M.E. Phelps (IOM and NAS), M.E. Raichle (IOM and NAS), M.M. Ter-Pogossian (deceased) (IOM), H.N. Wagner, Jr. (IOM), M.J. Welch (IOM), A.P. Wolf (deceased) (NAS), and R.S. Yalow (NAS). The Society should take great pride in their accomplishments and the recognition they bring to themselves and to our discipline.

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Business Ethics to Be Featured at SNM Meeting

The difficulties of reconciling evolving business issues with medical practice will be the focus of a panel session from 9:45–11:15 am on June 7 at this year's SNM meeting in St. Louis, MO. The session is titled "The Business of Medicine: an Ethical Challenge." Organizer and moderator Theodore J. Stahl, MD, reports that participants in the session will look at the tensions between medical and business ethics as experienced in the day-to-day operations of a medical practice. The panel of speakers includes an ethicist and representatives from an HMO and the insurance industry, who will discuss the ethical concerns faced in making decisions for their respective institutions. Case histories will be presented, and each member of the panel will offer a response to issues arising from these cases. Members of the audience will be encouraged to respond and participate. Speakers for the session include Gerard Magill, PhD, Stephen C. Spurgeon, MD, and Arnold Krubsack, MD.

Dr. Stahl notes that business has entered and altered the field of medicine in numerous ways. Single-practitioner offices continue to decline in numbers as large specialty practices, sprawling medical centers, and complex health organization grow rapidly. Medical finance has changed with ongoing developments in managed health care and the evolution of private, state, and federal third-party payers. Even the most basic and time-honored terminology has changed: the patient is now the "consumer" and the physician is the "provider." Somewhere in this confusion, the medical profession still exists. Stahl and the other presenters hope the session will promote a better understanding of the ways in which business and medical ethics can be reconciled to better serve the interests of the patient.

For more information about this or other educational courses scheduled for the annual meeting, contact Lauren Parr, SNM Course Manager, at 703-708-9000, ext. 1209, or by e-mail at Lparr@snm.org.