



New Horizons in Molecular Imaging/ Nuclear Medicine

As an SNM member, your name is forever linked to the pioneers who developed the field of nuclear medicine—from Becquerel and the Curies to de Hevesy, Seaborg, Cassen, and Yalow—and to the great advancements yet to come.

Medicine, science, and the world in which we live are constantly changing—and at a pace that appears to increase every year. The question is this: Are we ready for the changes that are coming?

As SNM president, my task is to ensure that the society is prepared. The society remains focused on its 3 fundamental goals: to ensure that molecular imaging/nuclear medicine are recognized universally in patient care, that the profession is vibrant and grows, and that membership in SNM is viewed as essential by all with an interest in our field.

Searching for new horizons means following new paths. Likewise, it is important that the society continue to develop new programs and focus on our future. We know that the molecular imaging revolution will lead to a much greater ability to characterize diseases, diagnose them at a very early stage, treat them effectively, and monitor the effectiveness of such treatment. SNM will continue to promote the research, education, and application of molecular imaging/nuclear medicine while still working in close harmony with other imaging organizations. That was evident at this spring's Molecular Imaging Summit, hosted by the SNM and the Radiological Society of North America (RSNA). SNM and 10 other biomedical organizations met to discuss the future of molecular imaging and to develop tools to prepare current generations of graduates for the future. The organizations will continue to explore future collaborative actions, including publication of the group's findings and action plans in a position statement.

Nuclear medicine, because of its foundations in biochemistry and physiology, is a specialty well positioned to capitalize on the coming advances in biomedicine. Recognizing this, SNM developed a Molecular

Imaging Center of Excellence and is now recruiting members. This new center, which successfully presented its first educational program in Toronto last month, will focus on promoting education in this emerging specialty.

Similarly, SNM's PET Center of Excellence was established to provide professional networking and educational programs for nuclear medicine professionals in PET and PET/CT, including clinical practice and procedure guidelines. The center's success story is one of continued growth and influence.

PET, PET/CT, SPECT, and now SPECT/CT have captivated the imagination of the current generation of molecular imaging/nuclear medicine professionals. These hybrid-imaging instruments have advanced our knowledge beyond any expectations, much the way cyclotrons, reactors, and gamma cameras did 50 years ago. In this issue you can read the collaborative white paper, "Concurrent PET/CT with an Integrated Imaging System: Intersociety Dialogue From the Joint Working Group of the American College of Radiology, the Society of Nuclear Medicine and the Society of Computed Body Tomography and Magnetic Resonance," which examines questions and concerns regarding equipment specifications, imaging acquisition protocols, supervision, interpretation, professional training, and safety issues surrounding the use of integrated PET/CT systems. This paper, summarizing the discussions and observations made by an expert panel, focuses on the needs of the community and was inspired by forward-thinking leaders of SNM and ACR.



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Referral and patient outreach are important, and we need to concentrate on the economics of nuclear medicine/molecular imaging. One way to do this is for SNM to collaborate closely with the American College of Nuclear Physicians, an organization created to foster the highest standards in nuclear medicine consultation and service to referring physicians, hospitals, and the public and to advance the science of nuclear medicine through improvement of the socioeconomic aspects of the practice of nuclear medicine. An active and viable college can only benefit our profession through essential educational, mentoring, and government relations programs.

When it comes to facing changes, SNM's leaders will rely increasingly on strategic advice from the society's

councils, centers, and committees. From past presidents to new trainees, everyone has a stake in the future of our profession and our society—and everyone can, and should, contribute. By utilizing our broad knowledge bank, your board of directors can remain up to date and well educated, serving you more efficiently. As an SNM member, your name is forever linked to the pioneers who developed the field of nuclear medicine—from Becquerel and the Curies to de Hevesy, Seaborg, Cassen, and Yalow—and to the great advancements yet to come. Together, we can face the challenges of the future because we will be prepared.

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challenged by how to educate working NMTs in CT and by how to ensure that new NMT graduates are competent enough in CT to immediately assume the role of fusion technologist. SNMSTS will need to look at the current offerings of NMT educational programs and make recommendations about these issues. Nuclear medicine technology is at a pivotal point, and SNMSTS leaders will need to discuss what educational changes are required to meet the needs of the future. We must always look ahead and think long and hard about current educational requirements to see if they are adequate to take NMTs through the next 5 or 10 years and beyond.

Provide Information

Through nuclear medicine we can image virtually every body organ system down to the molecular level, increase our knowledge of how the body works, and improve our understanding of diseases and their treatment. Nuclear medicine answers medical questions for all individuals, from children to the elderly, from injury to cancer, and from inherited to acquired metabolic diseases.

We must continue to inform the public about PET and its impact on patient care.

Outreach to Industry

While NMTs work closely with doctors, patients, and other members of the health care team, I hope SNMSTS can work with industry vendors and provide input for designing new equipment across modalities.

SNMSTS Organization

The SNMSTS governance reorganization is in place. Our changes in committee structure, the National Council of Representatives, and Executive Board responsibilities have positioned us to accomplish our long-term strategic goals. Over the next year, I would like to see an increase in the involvement and participation of the existing membership. With your help, I'd like to be a leader who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way.

*Valerie Cronin, CNMT
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