InfoSNM to Debut at SNM 2007 Annual Meeting

InfoSNM is coming to the 54th Annual Meeting of the SNM to be held in Washington, DC, June 2–6, 2007. I am extremely excited about the introduction of this new information technology component of the annual meeting, and I hope it will address an aspect of our field—the use of computers and information science—that has been missing.

The use of computers and information science continues to grow in all aspects of nuclear medicine, including clinical data processing, image data management, and education, as well as science. Computers have been an essential part of every nuclear medicine clinic since the introduction of the multigated radionuclide ventriculogram in the late 1970s. Today, computers seem to be everywhere, and our reading rooms are starting to look like NASA's Mission Control center. We are all trying to figure out how best to push nuclear medicine studies to picture archiving and communication systems (PACS) in a manner that best represents the excellent work we do. This is not always easy. Our images are routinely displayed at about the size of postage stamps, without color or fusion and with no ability to display gated tomographic studies.

The use of information technology in education is also growing at an unbelievable pace, from developing sophisticated Web-based learning modules to tasks as simple as developing effective PowerPoint presentations for our lectures. We are also trying to develop more efficient ways to take advantage of distance learning opportunities without taking the human side of education totally out of the picture. We use computers for almost every aspect of biomedical research, particularly in the field of molecular imaging. Such efforts may begin with performing more efficient literature searches on the Web, leading to better automation of data acquisition and analysis. The development of graphic user interfaces to the processing tools we routinely use (e.g., kinetic modeling using compartmental analysis) can greatly simplify the process, particularly for the less sophisticated user. The use of computer-based models can be valuable in determining which animal or physics experiments are most likely to yield pertinent results. Sometimes we lose sight of the ways in which computers and information science touch so many aspects of what we do every day in nuclear medicine.

However, the SNM Annual Meeting has not previously provided an appropriate venue for demonstrating newer and better ways to apply information science and technology to our field. Scientific presentations and posters appropriately focus on the underlying science and less on the tools essential for performing that science. Every year, a few abstracts are submitted that focus on the presentation of a new computer application for data analysis. It is often difficult to grade these abstracts relative to their science and to determine where in the scientific program they belong. For example, someone may develop a really nice graphic user interface for kinetic modeling that many would find informative, interesting, and helpful, but where is the appropriate forum to present this excellent work? A few continuing education sessions each year touch on the use of computers, but these are often scattered throughout the educational program and are difficult to locate.

Frederic Fahey, DSc

When I became chair of the Scientific Program Committee, I tried to think of ways to address the incorporation of presentations on the use of computers and information science into our annual meeting. Over the past few years, I have had several opportunities to attend the Radiological Society of North America Annual Meeting and have been impressed by the *info*RAD component of their meeting. This is both an exhibit area and a continuous series of presentations that include computer demonstrations by vendors, computer classrooms used for commercial presentations as well as general computer education, and computer-based presentations by attendees on information science and technology developed in their own laboratories. I wondered if we could have something like this—perhaps beginning on a much smaller scale—at our own meeting.

We have established the InfoSNM program, which will be introduced at the SNM Annual Meeting next June in Washington, DC. The Scientific Program Committee, the Computer and Instrumentation Council, and the SNM Education Department have developed a program that will initially consist of 2 components.

(1) We will institute a new abstract category: InfoSNM Computer Presentations. Abstracts for these presentations will be due at the same time as other scientific abstracts but will be reviewed by an entirely different set of reviewers using different criteria. Abstracts submitted for InfoSNM will be reviewed for the novelty of their use of computers rather than the novelty of their science. This use can be in education, data management, or science and can present the use of computers in the clinic and/or in the research lab. Each presentation will include both a poster that describes the work and a computer-based demonstration. Participants whose abstracts are chosen for presentation will have the option of using their own computers or sharing an SNM-provided computer with another presenter. Times will be designated at which presenters will describe their work,

(Continued on page 36N)

(Continued from page 32N)

^{188}Re-Labeled Pretargeting

Liu et al. from the University of Massachusetts Medical School (Worcester) and the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center (Oklahoma City) reported in the August 15 issue of *Clinical Cancer Research* (2006;12:4958–4964) on a study of ^{188}Re-radiolabeled pretargeting for more effective drug delivery in radiotherapy. This article is a follow-up to original work in which the authors proposed the Watson–Crick pairing of phosphorodiamidate morpholino oligomers (MORF) as a recognition system in tumor pretargeting and initial studies using MORF pretargeting with ^{99m}Tc as the radiolabel. In the current study, mice injected with ^{188}Re-labeled MORF showed rapid tumor localization of tracer and rapid clearance from normal tissues. Tumor growth in the study group ceased 1 day after injection, whereas tumors continued to grow at a constant rate among the 3 different control groups. Average net tumor weights were also significantly lower in the treatment than the control groups at day 5, when the mice were killed and results analyzed. The authors concluded that "MORF pretargeting has now been shown to be a promising approach for tumor radiotherapy as well as diagnosis."

Clinical Cancer Research

(Continued from page 14N)

offer demonstrations, and answer questions. This provides a new opportunity to present this excellent work at the SNM Annual Meeting. I hope that many members of the nuclear medicine community will consider participating in this novel effort.

(2) We will also designate a classroom in which educational and informational programs on information science and technology will be offered throughout the meeting. These programs may be specific to our field or of more general interest. For example, a representative of the Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise initiative may discuss the development of guidelines for the more effective display of nuclear medicine image data within a PACS environment. Another individual might present different approaches to comparing a patient's ^{18}F-FDG PET brain scan with a normalized database. Because we will be in Washington, DC, it might be useful to invite a representative from the National Library of Medicine to show us how to perform more directed and efficient PubMed literature searches.

Both of these components of the InfoSNM program will be located in the same meeting area, with a partition that can be pulled to separate them if necessary. This area will be well marked and should be easy to find. I am very excited about this new program. Although it may begin slowly, I hope it will continue to grow in the years to come. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me at frederic.fahey@childrens.harvard.edu (617-355-2809), other members of the InfoSNM Committee (Jim Halama, Marie Kijewski, and Jerry Wallis), or Lynn Barnes, director of education at the SNM (lbarnes@snm.org). I look forward to seeing all of you in the InfoSNM area next June in Washington, DC!

Frederic H. Fahey DSc
Chair, SNM Scientific Program Committee

(Continued from page 26N)

is included in the *Federal Register* notice.

To submit electronic comments, visit www.fda.gov/dockets/ecomments. Written comments may be sent to: Division of Dockets Management (HFA-305), Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061, Rockville, MD, 20852. Comments must be received by November 9 and include the docket number 2006N-0292.

U.S. Food and Drug Administration

PET in Court

The nuclear medicine community watched with interest in August as PET imaging was used as part of the defense strategy in an appeal on behalf of a convicted murderer in Georgetown County, SC. Lawyers for Stephen Stanko, an inmate on death row at Lieber Correctional Institution in Ridgeville, filed an appeal on August 21 indicating that PET imaging showed brain damage. The basis of the appeal, which will go to the South Carolina Supreme Court, is that Stanko's execution would be unconstitutional because he has brain damage and could not control his actions. The filing came at the same time that state prosecutors announced their intention to seek a second death penalty for Stanko in another killing. The defendant's lawyer told the press that the initial introduction of PET in the defendant's first trial "was a precedent-setting case.... We're opening our eyes to why people do these things. He [Stanko] has a brain defect from birth. He has 50%–80% loss of function in the frontal lobe and that translates into lack of character." The appeal may take up to 1 year.

Prosecutors and most medical observers were skeptical of the attorney's remarks and of the relevance of PET results in this case. However, the case—and the public interest generated—are reminders that as nuclear medicine procedures continue to explore verifiable measures of brain function in addiction, schizophrenia, and a range of dementias, nuclear medicine experts will be more frequently called upon to interpret the results of imaging in the legal setting.

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