

knowledge not easily delivered within the current structure of entry-level educational programs. The summit allowed SNMETS officers to discuss the obstacles to implementing new recommendations about entry-level requirements and to brainstorm methods to implement such requirements.

Baccalaureate entry-level requirements will not affect current nuclear medicine technologists and will need to satisfy educational progression needs for those moving to the NMP level. This “2+2” model—2 years of general studies plus 2 years of professional curriculum—was identified as the most suitable baccalaureate model. Core curriculum and general education requirements to meet these needs were identified and discussed. Attendees produced a draft curriculum of 121–124 hours for an entry-level program that consists of prerequisites (general education), core curriculum (anatomy, chemistry, physics, algebra, statistics, etc.), professional technical courses (biomedical ethics, cross-sectional anatomy, instrumentation, radiation safety, patient care, emerging technologies, etc.), and electives (health care management, microbiology, genetics, cellular biology, etc.).

Summit attendees discussed the importance of NMTs achieving competence in the molecular sciences and of becoming technically competent, well-rounded, critical thinkers. It was voiced that to achieve professional status in the eyes of the federal government, the profession must require a bachelor’s degree for entry level and that technologists need to be involved in lifelong learning.

SNMETS would like to have the new standards in place by 2010 and all NMT programs apply the baccalaureate degree by 2015. The priority of this process is to phase up—not phase out—existing programs. Another goal is to do a better job of communicating with members and stakeholders. To accomplish these goals, subgroups were appointed to focus on programmatic transition, core

curriculum, collaborating with external stakeholders, and outreach to the nuclear medicine community.

Advanced Practice NMT

As part of its most recent strategic plan, SNMETS was charged with evaluating the need and the desire for an advanced level of clinical practice for NMTs. As the profession of nuclear medicine has matured and changes in health care have occurred over the past years, many NMTs have taken on roles in the clinical practice setting that are generally considered over and above the entry-level practice domain. Today, technologists may be asked (under the supervision of a physician) to administer interventional drugs, stress and monitor cardiac patients, and/or obtain an informed consent for specified procedures. NMTs must acquire new skills to keep up with technically complex SPECT and PET imaging in the new world of molecular imaging. Technologists and physicians have been surveyed about—and are supportive of—the development of an advanced nuclear medicine practitioner.

Summit participants discussed the competencies and curricular requirements for developing a master’s degree-level NMP program—a new level of opportunity for SNMETS members. It was agreed that the curriculum will be geared toward a general practitioner—rather than a specialist—and that the length of the program should be approximately 2 years. The proposed competencies will be presented to NCOR and Executive Board members for approval at this month’s SNM’s Mid-Winter Educational Symposium.

This year, SNMETS will continue to build the future of the nuclear medicine profession for our members and nonmembers alike.

*Valerie R. Cronin, CNMT, FSNMETS
President, SNMETS*

Delivering Quality

The quality of the Society of Nuclear Medicine’s programs, courses, meetings, products, and services is the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction, and skillful execution. Guided by SNM leaders, it is the society’s habit to provide the best for our members—and this year’s balanced, fiscally sound budget continues to deliver crucial programs and services to 16,000 physician, technologist, and scientist members.

In Knowledge Power

The words *groundbreaking*, *improved*, and *powerful* aptly describe our diverse educational programs. We successfully launched our Lifelong Learning and Self-Assessment Program, allowing nuclear medicine health

care professionals to fulfill maintenance of certification requirements. Self-assessment modules will be released throughout the year, providing online continuing education to all our members. In addition, the SNM Learning Center was reorganized, focusing on advanced programs with a wider range of topics rather than on basic PET workshops. Society officers will continue to monitor trends in educational offerings to provide the most current topics, keeping the center offerings relevant to members—



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for example, through online courses and articles, board reviews, and case studies. Every year, our Mid-Winter Educational Symposium and Annual Meeting, with its more than 1,000 scientific papers, posters, exhibits, and CE courses, deliver highly rated educational experiences. As part of maintaining our quality program, our staff is complying with new Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education guidelines for educational offerings.

We have instituted a Molecular Imaging Speakers Bureau with experts who can address nuclear cardiology, metabolic imaging, and general nuclear medicine. Funded through a GE Healthcare educational grant, this program allows an SNM member to make presentations that reach a wide variety of medical professionals, including referring physicians such as clinical oncologists, primary care physicians, neurologists, cardiologists, and pulmonologists.

To guide our specialty, we need to keep our eyes on key aspects of the nuclear medicine field. We're doing that with the "Nuclear Medicine Workforce in 2005." The first report of a larger, 3-year study of physicians and technologists—designed to provide information about personal demographics, employment, career paths, and workplace issues in this country—has been completed.

In Member Communications

As individual members and as members of committees, councils, or chapters, the society invites you to participate in its many professional, educational, and networking activities. Our 8 councils have been restructured and rejuvenated. Councils have planned and expanded educational offerings in their specialties with conference sessions, categorical sessions, continuing medical education courses, and workshops and have communicated research developments, professional news, case studies, and regulatory information to members via printed newsletters and e-letters, as well as through Web sites and communities. In addition, SNM's 13 state and regional chapters offer a unique way to network and share ideas with colleagues.

Opportunities are also available for those new to the profession. As a member of our Young Professionals Community—nuclear medicine residents, fellows, and young physicians and scientists—find a vital forum that gives you the opportunity to impact training and career development. And by adhering to recently drafted core values, SNM staff is emphasizing the importance of member and customer satisfaction with all interactions.

In Industry Relationships

Working with industry ensures that the research undertaken is relevant and can be practically applied. SNM collaborates with the commercial representatives of

its Nuclear Medicine Industry Leaders Working Group on advocacy issues with the Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and on support for physician outreach, educational initiatives, and international programs.

Our Industry Partnership Program is aimed at encouraging collaborative efforts with industry to promote rapid advance and innovation in medical care through molecular imaging. This year, industry and SNM leaders will discuss molecular imaging basic research, clinical issues, instrumentation, and drug discovery during an Industry Molecular Imaging Summit. Members of our Molecular Imaging Center of Excellence (COE) will use this input to create topical activities and educational programs.

In Public Impact

Your society worked tenaciously behind the scenes in Washington, DC, to counter cuts in basic and clinical nuclear medicine research from the Department of Energy's FY 2006 budget. Within hours of the budget's original release, SNM developed an action plan to counter the proposed budget cuts. Thousands of society members sent e-mails and letters to the chairs and members of key committees in the House and Senate. In addition, we contacted other associations and industry leaders to join our efforts and met with Capitol Hill health care champions. Unfortunately, in spite of all our actions, \$23 million was cut from the Biological and Environmental Research Medical Applications and Measurement Science program. SNM will continue to work with congressional leaders to fully fund the program for FY 2007.

SNM continues its outreach efforts with members of numerous allied groups. For example, we recently participated in a meeting with the Health Professions Network, a premier group of health care practitioners—including educators, accreditors, and administrators—working to positively impact the delivery of high-quality patient care.

Millions of people have read or heard about SNM and its members over the past year through an increased emphasis on public relations, which brings more news about you and your work to professional and consumer publications. Also, our Annual Meeting was recently voted as one of the top 10 association/trade show/CME event/imaging-related educational programs in the first annual *Medical Imaging Industry Top 10*.

As you can see, these are but a few examples of how SNM remains committed to providing high-quality programs and services—and a future of value—for members and nonmembers.

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