

SNM's new Lifelong Learning and Self-Assessment Program (LLSAP), which has been developed to meet Part 2 of the new MOC requirements—continuous self-assessment. The first 4 modules were launched last December, with an additional 56 modules planned for introduction during 2006. Each module includes a syllabus with the latest information in the field, board-type multiple-choice questions with discussion of correct and incorrect answers, and interactive case studies with the opportunity for the participant to compare his or her report of the case with that of an expert. The cases utilizing PET/CT include images in Digital Imaging and Communication in Medicine format and software to create a virtual workstation for participants.

The SNM is also developing sets of interactive cases focusing on CT and PET/CT. These cases will help physicians meet the requirements for Part 4 of the ABMS MOC. The SNM will be working closely with the American Board of Nuclear Medicine to develop more tools for Part 4 over the next year.

Emerging technologies formed the second focus of discussion by the Committee on Education during its strategic planning meeting. Two years ago, the SNM began to make changes in its educational activities to accommodate the trend from PET to PET/CT fusion and other fusion imaging modalities. The Learning Center revamped its curriculum and offerings in January 2004, including the addition of more neurology PET/CT, cardiac PET/CT, and advanced oncology PET/CT workshops and symposia. In 2006, the Learning Center will add educational activities in CT and molecular imaging for physicians and in CT and cross-sectional anatomy for technologists.

Related to the issue of emerging technologies is the trend among health care professionals to rely increasingly on the Internet to access information and participate in educational activities. Data reviewed by the Committee on Education from a variety of sources, including the recent SNM Workforce Survey, confirmed this trend. As a result, many of the educational products offered in 2006 will be Web-based. The

SNM Learning Center began to offer courses online in January, with plans to offer the advanced oncology PET/CT, neurology PET/CT, and cardiac PET/CT courses online during 2006. In addition, a new format with both online and live activities will be introduced this year for technologists. The Learning Center will offer a weekend CT workshop that includes online prerequisite courses. If this combination format is well received, more may be planned in the future. Additional future projects being planned by the SNM Education Program Development Committee include a case-based journal offering continuing education credit and online educational activities for SNM's scientist and pharmacist members.

Finally, there are many societies and organizations with an interest in nuclear medicine/molecular imaging, and within the SNM itself there are chapters, councils and centers of excellence. Many of these groups are vying to provide the nuclear medicine/molecular imaging professionals with educational programs. Among the action items targeted for this year as a result of the strategic planning meeting are efforts to collaborate with these organizations to share resources, expertise, and content to provide optimal educational activities for all members.

The Committee on Education has appointed a monitoring team to continually assess the needs of SNM members based on changes in technology and the marketplace and the success of current and new educational activities over the next year. The purpose of this team is to ensure that SNM's educational program continues to meet the needs of its members and to assist them in their ever-changing practices.

*Tom R. Miller, MD, PhD*  
*Chair, SNM Committee on Education*

*Alan H. Maurer, MD*  
*Chair, SNM Education Programs Development Committee*

*N. Lynn Barnes, MEd*  
*Director of Education, SNM*

## SNM Brain Imaging Council

The SNM Brain Imaging Council (BIC) has been active in the initial part of its 2005–2006 term. One of the goals for the council has been to draft procedure guidelines for  $^{18}\text{F}$ -FDG PET brain imaging for SNM. Alan Waxman, MD, is heading a task force charged with drafting the guidelines. Work is ongoing at this point.

The BIC Board of Directors (BOD) will meet at the 2006 SNM Mid-Winter Meeting in Tempe, AZ, on February 11. At this meeting we will continue to pursue guideline development and also address the status of normal database compilation for  $^{18}\text{F}$ -FDG PET brain images. Just as the normal database of  $^{99\text{m}}\text{Tc}$  brain perfusion radiopharmaceu-

tical SPECT was compiled and made available by the BIC, the goal for a normal database for  $^{18}\text{F}$ -FDG PET brain scans will be to aid in the education and research missions of the BIC as the practice of brain imaging with PET becomes a major tool in clinical medicine. We have noted that the initial Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services approval of  $^{18}\text{F}$ -FDG PET in 2004 for differentiation of



**David H. Lewis**

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Alzheimer's disease from frontotemporal dementia has led to more imaging studies for PET. With this emphasis, the BIC hopes to see even more expanded use in the future. In addition, the Kuhl-Lassen Award and potential recipients will be discussed at the BOD meeting in February.

Areas in which cutting-edge research continued in 2005 and into 2006 are exemplified by work being done at the University of Pittsburgh (PA), Washington University (St. Louis), the University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia), and at the University of California at Los Angeles in the development of PET amyloid imaging in the brain. This technique is yielding insights into the pathophysiology of Alzheimer's disease and mild cognitive impairment. Frontiers of brain imaging research are also being expanded with small animal imaging of the brain with microPET and also optical imaging and MR imaging. It is also hoped that dopaminergic imaging will move from the research realm into clinical practice in North America, as it has in Europe.

For the SNM Annual Meeting in San Diego, CA, June 3–7, 2006, the BIC has planned and will sponsor a number of educational activities. First, on Saturday, June 3, will be a 1-day categorical seminar on “Biomarkers in Central Nervous System Diseases.” In addition, continuing medical education sessions sponsored by the BIC will include 2 “Read with the Experts” sessions, a session on “Dopaminergic Imaging in Movement Disorders,” the Kuhl-Lassen Award Lecture, and a session on “Practical Cerebrovascular Imaging with Nuclear Medicine.” The BIC's mission is to enhance and support brain imaging education and to foster new investigators in brain imaging research. Thus, this year will see continuance of the Young Investigator's Award abstract session in the neurosciences presentations at the SNM Annual Meeting. We hope to see you in San Diego!

David H. Lewis, MD  
Chair, SNM Brain Imaging Council

## The Young Professionals Committee

**T**he SNM Young Professionals Committee (YPC) has gained great momentum over the past year and a half, and I am delighted to provide this brief summary to update the nuclear medicine community on our ongoing and upcoming endeavors.

During the first half of the 2005–2006 year, the YPC's efforts focused on 2 major issues of interest to young professionals and the SNM: education and the current state of the nuclear medicine job market. The expanding use of fusion imaging with PET/CT and now SPECT/CT requires nuclear medicine physicians to become well versed in anatomic imaging for accurate functional image interpretation. There is concern that job availability has already or could become limited for those nuclear medicine physicians who are not formally trained or board certified in radiology. However, a paucity of data is available on the current state of the nuclear medicine job market to support this hypothesis.

As a first step, the YPC recently distributed a survey through the Nuclear Medicine Program Directors Association and our Web site to poll recent nuclear medicine graduates regarding their experience in finding a job in nuclear medicine. The overall objective of “The Nuclear Medicine Job Market Survey” is to gain a better understanding of the current state of the job market for nuclear medicine physicians. We anticipate that the data compiled from this survey will be used to help direct our efforts to those concerns that are most important to address.

In addition, the YPC is represented on the SNM Committee on Education. This committee has identified CT training for nuclear medicine physicians as an important educational issue.

At the 2005 Association of University Radiologists (AUR) meeting, YPC members had the opportunity to meet with an organization of chief radiology residents. As many readers are probably aware, the American Board of Radiology has decreased the amount of required training in nuclear medicine from 6 to 4 months, yet the number of topics radiology residents must master is increasing to include molecular imaging, therapy, and PET. The SNM is a logical organization to provide supplemental training in the areas in which radiology residents might not be receiving adequate instruction and experience during their general nuclear medicine training. Consequently, the YPC conducted a survey of radiology residents to gather data about which topics to cover and how to best present and distribute such educational materials. Approximately 140 radiology residents completed the survey, and the final data will be presented at the 2006 AUR Meeting in Texas.

A lot of work lies ahead for the YPC. In addition to completing the projects already described here, the YPC will sponsor online teaching files, and plans are underway for a workshop at the YPC luncheon at the 53rd SNM Annual Meeting in San Diego. The best “Young Professionals' Abstracts” will again be recognized at the