



# Nuclear Medicine Coalition Report

**T**he Nuclear Medicine Coalition expanded its scope to include other government-related issues in addition to Food & Drug Administration (FDA) topics. The first coalition meeting since the expansion of focus was held on May 1 in Washington, DC, with approximately 50 industry representatives, trade group leaders, patient advocates, and nuclear medicine professionals on hand for the discussions.

Speakers included George Mills, director of the Division of Medical Imaging & Hematology Products at the FDA; Liz Connell, health advisor to Senator Ted Stevens (R-AK); William Heetderks, director of extramural science programs at the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering (NIBIB); and Eleanor Kerr, director of government relations, Siemens Corporation. The speakers presented a wide variety of topics, including FDA drug approval and advisory group issues, NIH-NIBIB functionality, basic science research funding at the Department of Energy (DOE), and the Deficit Reduction Act and other reimbursement issues.

## Basic Nuclear Medicine Research Funding

The fiscal year 2007 appropriations cycle is now underway, and SNM continues to battle for basic science projects formerly funded through the DOE Office of Science/Office of Biological and Environmental Research

(OBER) Medical Applications and Measurement Science (MAMS) Program. SNM staff, consultants, and leaders have revisited all House and Senate Energy and Water Development Subcommittee appropriators—the legislators charged with DOE appropriations—as well as select members of the science authorization committees and Labor, Health and Human Services appropriations subcommittees. In addition to meetings with staffers and members, a “Dear Colleague” letter signed by Senator Christopher Bond (R-MO) and Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) is currently circulating on Capitol Hill in preparation for the imminent Senate energy appropriations bill markup.

In the House of Representatives’ version of the energy appropriations bill, the House distributed OBER money to specific earmarked projects, as opposed to including language restoring funding for the MAMS program as a whole. Thus, we now need the Senate to restore funding for the program, and the House to recede to the Senate language in conference committee later this summer. ✧



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molecular imaging evolution by capitalizing on our signature strengths: our multidisciplinary members who are intensely gifted researchers, our forward-thinking leaders who promote the discovery of new science and creation of new techniques and technologies, our body of knowledge published in our journals, our exceptional annual meetings that showcase current research, and our deep commitment to training the next generation of medical practitioners. SNM leaders voted in April—and reaffirmed at the Annual Meeting after much study, discussion, and debate—to act in this moment of promise to expand the scope of the society and lead the profession forward. SNM now embraces a strategic plan with an expanded core purpose: *To improve health care by advancing molecular imaging and therapy.*

SNM will wrap its societal arms around emerging technologies by reaching out to experts in related fields. SNM will facilitate the movement of molecularly guided discoveries from bench to bedside. “Bench to Bedside: A Molecular Imaging Campaign” will raise \$5 million over the next 5 years to support outreach activities to referring physician and patient groups, fund translational clinical studies

and small innovative trials, support advocacy for molecular imaging, train the current imaging workforce, and educate future generations of practitioners on the applications of molecular imaging. SNM’s annual meetings, journal articles, and grants and awards program will increasingly reflect the evolution of molecular imaging and therapy.

Over the next 3–5 years, the society’s expanded goals include being members’ indispensable resource for education, knowledge exchange, training, and networking; the powerful advocate for molecular medicine, including imaging and therapy; the leader in educating and promoting collaboration with referring physician and patient groups; and a significant supporter of innovations in translational research. SNM will emerge as the society that positions molecular medicine as an essential tool in providing the highest standards of patient care around the world. You may eventually see a new “look” and name for the society as we work on goals to achieve our expanded core mission while continuing the work of our founders.

The next year will be an exciting one as SNM expands its original core mission to bridge to a future with molecular imaging and therapy. ✧