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of scientists and industry on new imaging technologies and adjust educational programs as needed; work to increase the number of certified technologists in all states in this country; and provide opportunities for those interested to extend their professional education to the graduate level—all efforts supported by SNMITS. We are also continuing efforts to upgrade minimum education requirements for nuclear medicine technology certification to a bachelor's degree at entry level and to develop certification processes for CT and/or MRI. This survey supports the direction SNMITS is taking in determining how nuclear medicine technologists of today may broaden their scope to become the imaging specialists or molecular imaging technologists of tomorrow.

*Educating Technologists of the Future.* Although maintenance of certification (MOC) directly affects physicians, its reach will extend to technologists and scientists. SNM offers a myriad of educational programs that ease the way for nuclear medicine professionals to continue their lifeline learning. Online workshops for technologists are available in advanced oncologic PET and PET/CT, CT, and cardiac imaging. *The Journal of Nuclear Medicine* is a valuable resource for our profession, and the *Journal of Nuclear Medicine Technology* continues its excellent coverage of technologist issues under the helm of new editor Frances L. Neagley.

*Securing Continued Successes.* Although the U.S. House of Representatives failed to take action on the Consumer

Assurance of Radiologic Excellence (CARE) bill, the Senate did pass its version, the RadCARE bill. SNMITS and the Professional Development Education Fund continue to support and encourage technologists to initiate innovative research projects and enter nuclear medicine technologist programs. And we've brought a molecular imaging presence overseas to both the 9th World Congress of Nuclear Medicine and Biology and the annual congress of the European Association of Nuclear Medicine. Technologists living outside North America face the same issues that we do, and the topics for continuing education sessions at those meetings were similar, addressing common obstacles such as standardization of training and methodology and promoting activism.

*Capturing Our Demographics.* The 2005 survey provided the most comprehensive picture of nuclear medicine technologists ever developed and contains information about demographic characteristics, education, employment, career paths, and attitudes about the profession. Our future is bright as findings show that we enjoy our jobs, find our salaries near the top of the scale for professions with similar educational requirements, are well educated, and remain poised for continuing growth and change—all the more reason to continue the good work that we're doing.

D. Scott Holbrook, CNMT, PET, FSNMITS  
President, SNMITS

From the SNM Chief Executive Officer

## A Society of Substance

**S**NM has always been—and will continue to be—a society of substance as it maintains its lead with issues important to nuclear medicine and as it branches out to improve health care by advancing molecular imaging and therapy.

*Following New Goals.* SNM implemented a new strategic direction; it is our roadmap for the future. We have added the tagline, “advancing molecular imaging and therapy,” but our short- and long-term strategic goals, values, objectives, and strategies are not merely cosmetic. Over the next 3–5 years, SNM intends to become members' *indispensable resource* for education, knowledge exchange, training, and networking; the *powerful advocate* for molecular medicine, including imaging and therapy; the *leader in education* and in promoting collaboration with referring physician and patient groups; a significant *supporter of innovations* in translational research; and the *society that positions molecular medicine as an essential tool* in providing the highest standards of patient care around the world.

*Providing Essential Resources.* This past year's actions show that substance rules SNM's every move—with equal

importance placed on advancing nuclear medicine and molecular imaging. SNM continues to disseminate critical information and knowledge about new research and modalities. The potential of new developments for patient care will be communicated as quickly as possible by a concerted effort through our journals, Web site, books, conferences, and lectures.



Virginia Pappas, CAE

SNM, which recently successfully complied with new Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education guidelines for educational offerings, anticipated the changes maintenance of certification (MOC) requirements would bring and developed its Lifelong Learning and Self-Assessment Program (LLSAP). Nearly 2 dozen systems-based online LLSAP modules have been introduced in oncology PET and PET/CT, nuclear cardiology, molecular imaging, and basic science; additional modules will be released this spring. SNM continues to monitor trends in educational offerings to provide the most current topics, offering increasingly popular online

courses and articles, board reviews, and case studies. We are working toward providing 150 PET/CT and 500 diagnostic CT online case studies for MOC requirements. A new task force will examine MOC requirements, possibly linking practice standards with our own phantom program.

Every year, our Mid-Winter Educational Symposium and Annual Meeting, with more than 1,000 scientific papers, posters, exhibits, and CE courses, deliver highly rated educational experiences. This year's Annual Meeting in Washington, DC, will feature a continuing education session specifically addressing MOC requirements and issues.

**Gaining Industry Support.** With members of our Molecular Imaging Center of Excellence, the society has drafted a separate 5-year action plan utilizing a community approach to moving molecular imaging research from bench to bedside. The society is grateful for the support (nearly \$3 million) it has received from corporate donors GE Healthcare, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Siemens Medical Solutions USA, IBA Molecular, Philips, and FluoroPharma. The "Bench to Bedside" campaign will fund outreach activities to referring physicians and patient groups, support translational clinical studies and small innovative trials, and offer research grants and fellowships to advance new medical developments. The society welcomes Marybeth Howlett to its staff; she will serve as director of our Molecular Imaging Center of Excellence and implement its strategic initiatives.

SNM President Martin P. Sandler, MD, along with members Martin G. Pomper, MD, PhD, and Jean-Luc E. Vanderheyden, PhD, discussed the changes and growing importance of molecular imaging during a teleconference "virtual" summit sponsored by GE Healthcare for health care

reporters. This call provided reporters with an exclusive occasion to hear 3 of the profession's thought leaders discuss advances in—and the future of—molecular imaging.

**Raising Funds to Support Education.** This past year, nearly 400 individuals donated more than \$151,000 to the Education and Research Foundation for the SNM to fund technologist students, young professionals, the Bench to Bedside campaign, and fellowships. Industry partners—our "Bench to Bedside" donors along with Bracco, Mallinckrodt, Biogen Idec, Capintec, and MDS Nordion—supported fellowships, scholarships, research grants, travel awards, and educational grants for continuing medical education. New awards, grants, and fellowships in the areas of multimodality molecular imaging will be developed, with an eye on identifying new funding opportunities.

**Developing a Strong Brand.** SNM is committed to creating a powerful and well-recognized brand. In the coming months, the society will revise and launch the "look and feel" of our Web site, printed materials, and e-mail communications.

**Maintaining a Global Influence.** Numerous society members developed and presented sessions for the 9th World Congress of Nuclear Medicine and Biology and the annual meeting of the European Association of Nuclear Medicine. An international contingent of members (Richard Baum, MD, Germany; Ignasi Carrio, MD, Spain; Christer Halldin, PhD, Sweden; and Mathew Thakur, PhD, and Richard Wahl, MD, both from the United States) represented the society at the annual meeting of the Japanese Society of Nuclear Medicine.

*Virginia Pappas, CAE  
Chief Executive Officer, SNM*

## From the SNM Department of Health Policy and Regulatory Affairs

**M**embers of SNM and SNMITS were extraordinarily busy in 2006, addressing a full slate of reimbursement, legislative, regulatory, and scientific issues with direct relevance to nuclear medicine practice and the hundreds of thousands of patients who benefit from nuclear and molecular imaging and therapy techniques in the United States each year.

### Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services/Reimbursement

The SNM continues to work closely with the American Medical Association and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to address coding and reim-

bursement issues affecting the molecular imaging community. The SNM Coding and Reimbursement Working Group compiled and submitted comments regarding the 2007 Hospital Outpatient Prospective Payment System (HOPPS) rule and the 2007 Physician Fee Schedule (PFS) rule to the CMS. SNM was persuasive with many of these comments and suggestions, as evidenced in both final rules. SNM members and staff plan to meet with CMS on some



**Hugh Cannon**

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