



Moving Professionally

No one gets anywhere in the world by simply being content. SNM and SNMTS leaders believe this is true for the society as well, continually pushing the envelope when it comes to providing services for you. A case in point is our recent Mid-Winter Educational Symposium in San Antonio, TX. SNM held its symposium jointly with the annual meeting of the American College of Nuclear Physicians (ACNP), providing 4 days of back-to-back continuing education opportunities. This exceptional educational collaboration was so successful that SNM and ACNP will duplicate this unique learning and networking opportunity next year.

At the same time, SNM and SNMTS leaders aptly handled the business of the society, resulting in a series of positive actions that are presented here.

Getting a New Look: Soon, a new unified “look” will be evident on our Web site and in printed materials and e-mail communications—thanks to forward-thinking leaders who approved a visual design that reflects SNM as a vital, credible, collaborative, influential, and evolving professional association. You’ll hear more about how our new look, which reinforces our new mission to improve health care by advancing molecular imaging and therapy, as we get closer to our Annual Meeting.

Defining Molecular Imaging: Progress continues on developing a formal definition of *molecular imaging* as members of the Molecular Imaging Center of Excellence (MICOE) Board of Directors advanced a draft definition to SNM board members for review.

Impacting Advocacy: A new way to report the impact of molecular imaging and nuclear medicine procedures on patient management—especially for outreach efforts to legislators, regulators, and the public—is needed, reported members of the Health Care Policy and Practice (HCPP) Committee. Committee members recommended that a group be formed to develop a methodology and data to support such an “impact factor.” This action was approved and could help extensively with planned government relations activities during our 54th Annual Meeting in Washington, DC.

Addressing Medication Management: SNM officers also approved the HCPP Committee’s request to initiate a task force with physicians, nuclear medicine technologists, and pharmacists to develop medication management and reconciliation processes that meet existing regulatory expectations for adjunctive medications used in nuclear medicine.

Creating a GI Council: Our House of Delegates approved the creation of a new council to increase the awareness of—and promote—the utilization of a wide range of

gastrointestinal scintigraphic studies and to develop more universal standardization of these procedures. This council will assist in developing educational programs, work to improve reimbursement for time-consuming and labor-intensive protocols, and may also develop clinical trials to establish normative control values and clinical value.

Taking the Pulse of the Profession: Presentations to officers included an overview of nuclear medicine technology, educational programs, and credentialing, licensure and scope of practice efforts by SNMTS President Scott Holbrook, CNMT, PET; status of the society’s molecular imaging campaign by Peter Conti, MD, PhD; physician training and qualifications in the era of hybrid functional/anatomical imaging by Dominique Delbeke, MD, PhD; a report on PET Center of Excellence activities by James Fletcher, MD; an evolution of educational programs in nuclear medicine by Michael Graham, MD, PhD; an update on Part 4 maintenance of certification requirements by Conrad Nagle, MD; building a safer health system by Henry Royal, MD; a *Journal of Nuclear Medicine* update by Heinrich Schelbert, MD, PhD; and an overview and update on MICOE by Henry VanBrocklin, PhD.

Focusing on Our Chapters: Almost 30 chapter presidents, presidents-elect, and executive directors met for nearly 3 hours with society officers during the Committee on Chapters meeting. Chapter officers determined that they should meet regularly and agreed to hold a standalone meeting this summer to undertake strategic planning. An SNM or SNMTS leader will be present—and available to discuss any topic—at every chapter meeting this year.

Reaching Out to Patient Groups: To promote molecular imaging and therapy and nuclear medicine—and increase its own visibility—SNM has broadened its outreach, joining the Commission on Cancer, a consortium of professional organizations dedicated to improving survival and quality of life for patients, and the National Coalition for Cancer Research, a group dedicated to the eradication of cancer through vigorous public and privately supported research efforts. Joining key leaders in government, regulatory, and industry groups, SNM is also a member of the Biomarkers Consortium, a group that promotes the discovery, development, and qualification of biomarkers, hoping to speed research.



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CMS quality improvement organizations, has entered into subcontracts as part of the Better Quality Information to Improve Care for Medicare Beneficiaries (BQI) Project with the: Indiana Health Information Exchange, Massachusetts Health Quality Partners, Minnesota Community Measurement, and Wisconsin Collaborative for Healthcare Quality. The results of the BQI Project will be used to provide performance information to physicians that will assist them in improving the quality of care for Medicare beneficiaries and to give physician performance information to Medicare beneficiaries to assist them with physician selection.

“This is an important advancement,” said CMS Acting Administrator

Leslie V. Norwalk. “The BQI project will give Medicare beneficiaries a broad overview of provider performance resulting in better choices in meeting their health care needs. The regional collaboratives, spurred by great leadership from physicians and others in the health care community, will also provide critical information to physicians and Medicare on the best practices for data collection, aggregation, and reporting.”

The quality measures to be used in the BQI project are national consensus-based measures that have been adopted by AQA (an alliance of health care providers, health plans, senior groups, employers and unions that also played a role in the establishment of the subcon-

tracting collaboratives). The BQI project also aims to provide methods to aggregate Medicare claims data with claims data from other payers, including employers, health insurance plans, and in some case Medicaid programs, to produce more accurate measures of the quality of services being provided by physicians to Medicare recipients.

CMS plans to announce 2 additional BQI subcontractors in the near future. Additional information on each regional collaborative as well as the Department of Health and Human Services Value-Driven Health Care Initiative is available at www.hhs.gov/transparency.

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

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Being Inclusive: To ensure the long-term viability of molecular imaging and nuclear medicine, SNMTS approved bylaws to encourage not only nuclear medicine technologists but also those in related fields to join the Technologist

Section. Pending a vote by the general membership, this action would allow practitioners from emerging technologies to become members.

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