

2010 Capitol Hill Day

Leaders from SNM visited Capitol Hill on April 19 to discuss important issues relevant to the practice and science of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging. Led by SNM president Michael M. Graham, MD, PhD; SNM president-elect Dominique Delbeke, MD, PhD; and SNM vice-president-elect George M. Segall, MD, the group included more than 20 physicians, scientists, technologists, and SNM staff members. The first official joint nuclear medicine–related Capitol Hill Day was held in 2007, and response to this annual day of direct contact with legislators and staff has been overwhelmingly positive.

Among the action items that the SNM group promoted were:

(1) Legislation to ensure that appropriately performed nuclear medicine procedures are safe and readily available to patients, including requirements for accreditation and education in imaging. One immediate step would be support of H.R. 3652, the Consistency, Accuracy, Responsibility and Excellence in Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy (CARE) Act, as a means to require those who perform medical imaging and radiation therapy procedures to meet minimum federal education and credentialing standards to participate in federal health programs administered by the Department of Health and Human Services.

(2) Elimination of the Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) formula and development of permanent solutions for physician payment under Medicare Part B. The group emphasized that continuing to “paper over the issues with

budget gimmicks that provide short-term relief” will only make the problem worse.

(3) Support for \$30 million in funding for nuclear medicine research in the Fiscal Year 2011 Energy and Water Appropriations bill and assurances that such funding will be used for nuclear medicine research.

(4) Progress in ensuring access to vital medical radionuclides, particularly in creating a sustainable domestic supply through passage of HR 3276, the American Isotopes Production Act.

Each participant in Capitol Hill Day visited the offices of his or her own legislators. Robert W. Atcher, PhD, MBA, chair of the Joint SNM/American College of Nuclear Medicine Government Relations Committee; Jeffrey P. Norenberg, PharmD, chair of the SNM Commission on Radiopharmaceuticals; and Graham visited the offices of Representative Edward Markey (D-MA), who introduced HR 3276, the American Medical Isotopes Production Act in 2009. ✧



Barry L. Shulkin, MD, MBA; Dominique Delbeke, MD, PhD; and Todd E. Peterson, PhD, visit Capitol Hill.

From the RADAR Task Group

The RAdiation Dose Assessment Resource (RADAR) task group continues to maintain significant resources on internal dose assessment and to develop new models, data, and tools to standardize and facilitate this science for users. The group maintains an Internet Web site (www.doseinfo-radar.com) that contains much of the available data for immediate use and download and has several interactive tools that can be used for data lookup and new calculations. Recent activities and advances include:

(1) Completion of a large standardized phantom development project that represents a generational advance in these models, including: 12 adult and pediatric models (male and female at 6 ages) based on newly recommended reference masses by the International Commission on

Radiological Protection (1); 3 models representing the female at different stages of gestation (2); 8 adult male and female models representing larger and smaller normal-weight individuals (3); 2 adult male models representing different degrees of obesity (4); and 8 models representing smaller and larger mice and rats (5).

(2) Continued emphasis on the need for more realistic modeling of the dose to family members and others from released nuclear medicine therapy patients. RADAR members: published an invited commentary in *Health Physics News*, advocating a more scientifically based and patient-friendly approach to patient release (6) and a second commentary on recently released guidelines on patient release by
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