

Advancing Molecular Imaging Research

In 2006, SNM kicked off its Bench to Bedside campaign, a 5-y initiative dedicated to accelerating the translation of molecular imaging research into clinical practice for the benefit of patients worldwide. With this campaign, SNM aimed to broaden its focus to include not only nuclear medicine but also new imaging modalities—MRI, optical imaging, ultrasound and others—that represented the future of our field. The multifaceted campaign focused on 5 primary areas: raising awareness of molecular imaging, supporting advocacy for molecular imaging and therapy, educating and promoting collaboration with referring physicians and patient groups, training and educating the current and future workforces on the applications of molecular imaging, and supporting innovations in translational research.

As the Bench to Bedside campaign comes to a close at this year's Annual Meeting, SNM has successfully integrated molecular imaging into the society. Our advocacy efforts, education offerings, and journals have embraced molecular imaging, and we have expanded our membership to include scientists, laboratory professionals, and others who play a critical role in the future of imaging. The addition of these activities and members has enhanced SNM.

One of the programs created out of the Bench to Bedside campaign is the SNM Clinical Trials Network (CTN), an initiative designed to facilitate the use of molecular imaging biomarkers in multicenter clinical trials. Since its launch in 2008, the CTN has worked with pharmaceutical sponsors, providing them access to SNM's multicenter investigational new drug application for fluorothymidine; access to registries of qualified sites, manufacturers, and validated scanners; and imaging site education.

The CTN leadership has recognized that many of its programs are also of interest to other molecular imaging sectors. As such, the CTN is expanding its offerings to include a menu of options for imaging sites, biomarker manufacturers, SNM members, and others looking to get involved in the network.

To train imaging research personnel at imaging sites, the CTN maintains a comprehensive list of courses on the practice of clinical trials and the importance of standardization in imaging. In-person and online courses covering molecular imaging, regulatory compliance, and general clinical research are available for both novice and experienced

research professionals. Those interested in the courses can choose to purchase an individual course, the core curriculum, or the entire program.

The CTN will offer options for obtaining qualified site and validated scanner information. This information is useful to large pharmaceutical companies and of interest to smaller pharmaceutical companies, contract research organizations, or biomarker manufacturers when planning their studies. More information about the offerings can be found at the SNM Booth #1001 in the Annual Meeting exhibit hall.

At the Annual Meeting the CTN will sponsor 2 education courses, as well as a categorical session. Held on Saturday, June 4, "Molecular Imaging in Clinical Trials" will cover guidelines and regulations for using molecular imaging biomarkers in clinical research studies, the key elements of standardization and optimizing PET scanner performance. Of interest to many, the session will also review the most recent updates on manufacturing practices and guidelines for PET research drugs from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

SNM, along with the Coalition for PET Drug Approval, has worked closely with the FDA to clarify the regulations of 21 CFR Part 212, establishing Current Good Manufacturing Practices. Following a public meeting held by the FDA in March, SNM has developed a thorough understanding of the new regulations and how they will affect SNM members. We are eager to share this information with members at the Annual Meeting.

SNM's work to advance molecular imaging and therapy will continue and increase as it is now a full part of the organization. On behalf of the SNM leadership, I thank all of the members who have dedicated their time and efforts to integrating molecular imaging into the society over the last 5 y. We look forward to even more great accomplishments in the future.



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