

Planning for the Future of Nuclear and Molecular Imaging

As we all know, change is inevitable; in the medical field we see it just about every day. Between new imaging agents and modalities, federal regulations, procedure guidelines, and more, nuclear and molecular imaging are evolving at a rapid pace. The Society of Nuclear Medicine (SNM) understands these changes and wants to ensure that the society's work reflects where the field of nuclear and molecular imaging is headed.

To accomplish this we have put into place several task forces that will help determine the most appropriate path forward for SNM. In particular, 3 task forces have been formed to shape SNM's future—the 2020 Task Force, the SNM/ACR Task Force, and the Name Change Task Force. As with all changes within SNM, we want to make sure that we fully evaluate the options and discuss the impact of the changes so that we can proceed in the manner that is most advantageous to the society and the field.

The 2020 Task Force, which was formed last spring, has brought together a broad cross-section of health care professionals—physicians, scientists, pharmacists, and technologists from academic institutions, private practice, and industry, as well as other interested groups—to discuss the future of nuclear and molecular imaging. The end goal of the task force is to make recommendations that will serve as guiding principles for SNM to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

The task force has been divided into working groups and, at this point, each working group has conducted an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the specialty of nuclear medicine and of SNM as a professional society. Armed with that information, the working groups have begun to develop scenarios for the future of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging in the year 2020. This September, the 2020 Task Force will meet to develop a plan for SNM to maximize the likelihood of the best scenario.

While we may not know where the field will stand in 2020, we do know that we will continue to need medical professionals to carry out nuclear medicine and molecular imaging procedures. As a follow-up from the American College of Radiology/SNM report on nuclear medicine training that was published in the June issue of *JNM*, the ACR/SNM Nuclear Medicine Training Task Force II has been formed to create meaningful and practical residency training that will address the current needs for nuclear imaging and therapy, as well as look to the future of molecular imaging. Along with ACR and SNM, this group also includes representatives from the American Board of Radiology, the Amer-

ican Board of Nuclear Medicine, the Residency Review Committees for Radiology and for Nuclear Medicine, the Association for Program Directors in Radiology, and the Nuclear Medicine Program Directors Association.

In particular, the task force will address the various pathways to becoming a molecular imaging specialist. The group will work to harmonize nuclear medicine and diagnostic radiology training in its current state, but will also look to a future of a combined diagnostic radiology and nuclear medicine pathway. The task force will also review the types of accreditation and board certification needed in both the short and long term. A report from this task force is expected in November.

Finally, the SNM Name Change Task Force was convened earlier this year to assess the membership's feelings on changing the society's name to the Society of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging (SNMI). The SNM leadership believes that this name best represents where we have come from, who we are and where our future lies. However, given that this is a difficult decision, member input is extremely important. In May, *JNM* published an article discussing the potential name change and asking for member feedback. To date we have received more than 325 responses via e-mail, Facebook, and LinkedIn. The task force is in the process of reviewing these comments and will report back to the membership in the fall.

As you can see, SNM has taken an active stance to ensure that the society, as well as the field as whole, can thrive in the coming years. We believe that thorough planning is vital to arriving at outcomes that benefit our various types of members. If you have thoughts or questions on any of the task forces mentioned above, please don't hesitate to contact us at feedback@snm.org.

The next few months will be busy as recommendations and plans of action are developed for SNM. I look forward to sharing the results of our task forces with you in upcoming issues of *JNM*.



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