

Strengthening Our Profession Through Community and Collaboration

SNM members respect and appreciate the society for its #1-rated journal and annual meeting, for its education, and for the opportunity to interact with a rich, multidiscipline community of dedicated professionals. How can SNM improve its members' experience even further? And what can we all do to strengthen and improve the profession? As the new year begins, I look forward to working with SNM President George Segall, MD, my fellow SNM members, and society leadership to continue to chart the path forward for the society and maintain and improve its respected position in the profession.

The essential value of the tracer principle has ensured the success of nuclear medicine and therapy—and now molecular imaging—through more than 5 decades. SNM members have continually developed innovative new procedures and refined current clinical practice to deliver the best possible care for patients. One refinement that is a priority for the profession is to perform these studies with the least amount of radiation that still provides excellent clinical results. Recent advances in instrumentation and image processing can often make it possible to improve the quality of the studies while, at the same time, allowing for a reduction of the radiation dose to our patients. SNM needs to continue and increase its leadership role in making this happen in the United States and worldwide by researching and developing new standards, guidelines, and criteria and disseminating them through SNM's influential communication channels, including *JNM*, annual meeting sessions, and outreach.

In 2011, many of the top news stories related to medical imaging involved fear of radiation. One of my focuses over the past several years has been to establish standards to ensure that all pediatric nuclear medicine providers consistently acquire high-quality medical images while using only the smallest amount of radiation needed. In 2010, SNM, the Society for Pediatric Radiology, and the American College of Radiology (ACR) jointly approved the "North American Consensus Guidelines for Administered Radiopharmaceutical Activities in Children and Adolescents" (*JNM*, February 2011), establishing standards for 11 nuclear medicine procedures. SNM worked with the Alliance for Radiation Safety in Pediatric Imaging to launch the Image Gently "Go with the Guidelines" campaign to disseminate this information to every hot lab in the United States (www.snm.org/imagegently). I am personally very proud to have played even a small part in this very important endeavor.

In 2012, SNM will widen that focus to the potential for radiation dose reduction for adults. Working with a new alliance of imaging organizations—including the ACR, the

Radiological Society of North America, the American Society of Radiologic Technologists, the American Association of Physicists in Medicine, and the American Society of Nuclear Cardiologists—SNM will develop a nuclear medicine section for the Image Wisely Web site (www.imagewisely.org). The objective of Image Wisely is to lower the amount of radiation used in medically necessary imaging studies if possible and eliminate unnecessary procedures. The target date for debut of the new section of the site is June 2012.

With the Image Gently and Image Wisely collaborations, SNM was able to achieve consensus with other imaging societies that will lead to wider acceptance and better adherence to low-dose standards. Similar partnerships will help us understand and strengthen our field, essential for the success and advancement of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging in the years ahead. SNM's multidisciplinary nature makes collaboration a rich and powerful element of our identity as a society, so strengthening our relationships with others is a natural next step.

Given SNM's increasingly global orientation, we are also working to strengthen our collaborations with medical organizations around the world. The society has strong relationships already with the European Association of Nuclear Medicine, International Atomic Energy Agency, World Federation of Nuclear Medicine and Biology, and many country-specific nuclear medicine associations in Europe and Asia. We seek to work with the world leaders in our field to improve clinical practice through collaborative guidelines and to further advance the field through international partnerships. Because we view SNM as a global leader in nuclear medicine and molecular imaging, we need to support the implementation and proper practice of our field in developing countries.

In spite of current economic realities that many of us have faced for the past few years, nuclear medicine and molecular imaging have enduring strength. SNM will foster this strength and use it to improve the science, widen and expand it with new applications, expand it to geographical areas that are just beginning to explore the science, and increase the ability of SNM members to provide their patients with the best care possible.



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