

Update on Guidelines

In 2009, SNM and the American College of Radiology (ACR) began collaborating on guidelines and appropriate use criteria of common interest. Most of the ACR/SNM collaborative guidelines have been revisions of existing guidelines about common general nuclear medicine procedures. Although there are some differences between ACR and SNM guidelines, these differences can be used to the benefit of both organizations, with each organization taking advantage of the specific expertise of the other. The basic differences are: (1) the ACR may address several procedures in one guideline for evaluation of an organ system, including different radiopharmaceuticals and imaging protocols; (2) SNM guidelines tend to be more detailed than ACR guidelines; and (3) SNM guidelines address radiation dosimetry of radiopharmaceuticals. For these reasons, in 2009 the SNM made the decision to keep its own versions of the guidelines. The goal of the collaboration has been to minimize discrepancies in the content addressed in both sets of guidelines. SNM guidelines reference the ACR version of similar guidelines whenever appropriate, and ACR guidelines may refer to the SNM for more details as appropriate.

In 2011, the ACR expressed concerns about the SNM continuing to have its own guidelines on similar procedures that are addressed in collaborative ACR/SNM guidelines and requested that the SNM retire its own guidelines if the collaboration were to continue. The SNM Board of Directors has decided to keep its own guidelines when these are complementary to the collaborative guidelines. The SNM also continues to develop new guidelines describing new procedures, as new radiotracers and imaging hardware are introduced. For example, the SNM procedure guideline for ^{18}F -fluoride PET/CT bone scans was published in *The Journal of Nuclear Medicine* in November 2010, and the SNM guideline for dopamine transporter (DAT) imaging with ^{123}I -ioflupane SPECT was published in January 2012. The SNM Committee on Guidelines has initiated a collaborative cardiac hybrid guideline with the American Society of Nuclear Cardiology and the Society of Cardiovascular Computed Tomography. Each organization has 2 representatives in the writing group, which is chaired by Sharmila Dorbala, MD. The ACR, which was originally part of the group, unfortunately decided to withdraw from participation and also declined collaboration on the DAT guideline because it had not been initiated according to the ACR's preferred procedure for collaborative guidelines. This decision was quite disappointing. Despite these issues, which remain difficult to resolve, collaboration on guidelines of common interest is in

the best interest of the community and patients. The SNM remains open to collaboration on guidelines and other issues in the future.

In 2011, SNM and European Association of Nuclear Medicine (EANM) leadership began to discuss collaboration on various initiatives of common interest to advance global recognition of nuclear medicine as a strong and valuable specialty. One of these collaborations is on guidelines, and the first step was to create an SNM/EANM guideline steering committee, cochaired by Arturo Chiti, MD, from the EANM and Dominique Delbeke, MD, PhD, from the SNM. The members of the steering committee from the SNM are Kevin Donohoe, MD (chair of the SNM Committee on Guidelines), Henry Royal, MD, and Paul Christian. EANM members are: Bernd Krause, MD, PhD (from the EANM Oncology Committee), Jacques Darcourt, MD (from the EANM Neuroimaging Committee); and Albert Flotats, MD (from the EANM Cardiovascular Committee). The steering committee is revising the SNM Guideline on Guideline Development as a collaborative SNM/EANM guideline to reflect the framework for collaborative guidelines between the organizations.

The second step was identification of guidelines of interest for mutual endorsement by the organizations. By mid-March, 2 SNM guidelines had been endorsed by the EANM, posted on the EANM Web pages, and identified as endorsed by the EANM on the SNM Web site: (1) SNM Sodium ^{18}F -Fluoride with PET/CT Bone Scans 1.1 (2010) and (2) SNM Breast Scintigraphy with Breast-Specific Gamma Cameras 1.0 (2010). Two EANM guidelines have been endorsed by the SNM and are also posted on the SNM Web site: (1) $^{131/123}\text{I}$ -Metaiodobenzylguanidine Scintigraphy (2010); and (2) Radioimmunotherapy for B-Cell Lymphoma with ^{90}Y -Radiolabeled Ibritumomab Tiuxetan (Zevalin) (2006). The EANM guideline on ^{131}I -Metaiodobenzylguanidine Therapy (2008) is under review. The EANM has also invited the SNM to join collaboration on the "Joint EANM and International Atomic Energy Agency Practical Guidance on Peptide Receptor Radionuclide Therapy in Neuroendocrine Tumors," which also is currently under review.

The third step will be to jointly develop collaborative guidelines. The steering committee determined that the first 2 such collaborative guidelines will be on ^{18}F -FDG PET/CT for evaluation of inflammatory processes (already in progress at EANM) and on beta amyloid imaging.

Dominique Delbeke, MD, PhD
Editor in Chief, *The Journal of Nuclear Medicine*