

Expanding Our Global Collaborations

On behalf of the SNMMI board of directors, leadership, and staff, I wish each of you a happy and successful new year. It is a great time for people across the world to make resolutions about things they would like to improve. I, for example, have resolved to wear fewer silly neckties. The international nuclear medicine and molecular imaging community has resolved to join together in a global initiative to promote health by advancing molecular imaging and therapy, encouraging global collaboration in education, harmonizing procedure guidelines and other policies, and improving quality and safety. We have titled this endeavor the Nuclear Medicine Global Initiative.

The European Association of Nuclear Medicine (EANM) meeting in Milan, Italy, in October provided an opportune time for nuclear medicine and molecular imaging leaders from around the world to discuss the global initiative. Representatives from the Asia Oceania Federation of Nuclear Medicine and Biology, Australian and New Zealand Society of Nuclear Medicine, Canadian Association of Nuclear Medicine, Chinese Society of Nuclear Medicine, EANM, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Japanese Society of Nuclear Medicine, Korean Society of Nuclear Medicine, Society of Nuclear Medicine–India, and SNMMI participated in an initial meeting to determine which topics were of most interest around the world.

As each organization shared its top initiatives for the coming year, it became apparent that the opportunities and challenges that the field of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging faces are similar around the world. However, to make a true impact, a focused approach to advancing the field is necessary. As a group, we determined that the initiative should center on one topic that affects all of us, has a high probability of success, has concrete deliverables, and is free of regulatory and political boundaries. We wanted an initiative that can be completed in a reasonable time frame.

After some discussion, the group identified dose optimization as the first topic for the Nuclear Medicine Global Initiative. To get started, each organization has outlined what is most important to its constituency regarding dose optimization and what efforts in this regard are currently ongoing. A representative from each organization was also designated to serve on the global Dose Optimization Focus Group. I was struck by the energy and enthusiasm of all participants and that each has a clear sense of what should be

accomplished with regard to dose optimization. As we move forward with the global initiative, I will report back to SNMMI members.

Also on the global front, SNMMI has been active in supporting the practice of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging in developing countries through the educational resources of the society and the expertise of its members. Although nuclear medicine and molecular imaging procedures are fairly widely available in the United States, the quality of practice of nuclear medicine in many other countries can be highly variable or even nonexistent. By engaging in global initiatives and collaborating with peer societies from around the world, we can share our knowledge and experience so that patients can benefit from imaging procedures that can improve their health and well-being.

One example of this is our partnership with the IAEA to offer continuing education to those in developing countries. We have offered several webinars through the IAEA to increase the interpretive skills of nuclear medicine professionals in developing countries. In addition, we are working with the IAEA to offer training materials on PET and PET/CT, specifically in South America and Asia. We hope to continue this work throughout the year and for years to come.

Our work with EANM to produce collaborative guidelines on nuclear medicine and molecular imaging procedures has also been fruitful. I am pleased to report that SNMMI has approved guidelines on ^{131}I scintigraphy and therapy, as well as radioimmunotherapy for B-cell lymphoma. These guidelines can be found on www.snmmi.org. We are also making progress on a collaborative pediatric imaging guideline. It is through these sorts of international efforts that we hope to push the quality, practice, and science of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging to greater heights.

Much remains to be done, and I look forward to working with SNMMI members as well as colleagues from around the world to ensure a healthy future for the field of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging and improved health for all. Now where is that cool tie with the penguins on it?



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