Facilitation and Collaboration to Lead the Future

As part of SNMMI's strategic plan, one of our goals in 2014-15 is to facilitate the translation of new radiopharmaceuticals to the clinic, collaborating with academia, industry, other imaging associations, and government stakeholders. We have held several meetings over the past few months to clarify the regulatory climate, recommend ways to improve the existing approval pathway, and discuss ideas for a new approval pathway. We have also cosponsored workshops that have helped to identify regulatory barriers and work toward solutions to overcome them.

In October 2014 SNMMI, in collaboration with the National Cancer Institute (NCI), hosted the NCI-SNMMI Workshop on Targeted Radionuclide Therapy (TRT). This workshop is unique in that it includes a wide range of stakeholders invested in the success of TRT, including clinicians and scientists from a variety of scientific disciplines as well as representatives from the NCI, industry, and the academic community. As with its predecessor, held in March 2013, the purpose of this 2-day workshop was to stimulate discussion on the current and potential applications of TRT for the treatment of hematologic and solid cancers. In addition, the 2014 workshop focused on approaches for moving forward toward practical clinical implementation with buy-in from the medical community and society. These gatherings are uniquely helpful in moving toward realization of the promise of TRT, since the most successful implementation will be multidisciplinary.

Also in October, the society held a broad stakeholder meeting that brought together more than 40 experts from the field of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging to discuss the current regulatory climate for translation of new radiopharmaceuticals. Represented at the meeting were leaders from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), National Cancer Institute (NCI), National Institutes of Health, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, industry, academia, and specialty societies.

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Participants at the stakeholder meeting split into 4 breakout groups, which discussed market/commercialization barriers, strategies to improve the current approval process, possible new pathways, and outcome measures for both the FDA and CMS. The society is currently developing a detailed white paper, scheduled to be released in coming months, which will identify desired outcomes for each breakout group topic, action items, and strategies that SNMMI will implement.

In September, SNMMI initiated a unique effort that brings SNMMI leadership together with representatives of industry from the Medical Imaging and Technology Alliance and the Council on Radionuclides and Radiopharmaceuticals to address some of the biggest issues facing nuclear medicine today, including educating referring physicians and other audiences about nuclear medicine, achieving adequate reimbursement, and developing the evidence needed to support the advancement of the profession. The variety of perspectives, wide-ranging expertise, and experience represented in this group promise positive results. Watch Newsline for more information.

SNMMI is committed to facilitating meetings such as these, working with key groups to help advance the profession and our society. We recognize that collaboration with our members and stakeholders will be a driving force behind the change we hope to see in the years to come.

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