

## Demonstrating the Crucial Role of NMTs and Strengthening the Profession

*Kathleen Krisak, CNMT, SNMMI-TS President*

**T**his has been a year of transition, strategy, and growth. SNMMI-TS and the entire field are experiencing a time of enormous opportunities, if we can seize them. This past year marked the fourth of our strategic plan, and I am pleased to report that we have been able to fulfill most of the goals we set.

We have made tremendous strides with state licensure through the constant dedication of the states' Technologist Advocacy Group (TAG). TAG members have been monitoring state legislation and have even met with their state senators to ensure appropriate language is incorporated into bills.

In addition, we have been fortunate to have an energetic team of volunteers who have worked tirelessly to create the CT Essentials+ program, which assists nuclear medicine technologists (NMTs) who are interested in sitting for the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists CT exam or the Nuclear Medicine Technologist Certification Board CT exam. We have also revised our scope of practice and approved a new entry-level curriculum for NMTs. We are now in the process of creating a leadership program that will help managers and other supervising personnel train their staffs in leadership skills that are both general and specific to the nuclear medicine department.

These are significant accomplishments, yet we are still faced with challenges. We must constantly defend our scope of practice against infringement, and SNMMI-TS has struggled with identifying the appropriate education requirement for entry into the field. Under the direction of Sara G. Johnson, SNMMI-TS immediate past president, the SNMMI-TS Executive Board convened a series of "mega issue discussions" at last year's Annual Meeting. These discussions laid the groundwork for discussion of the critical question, "What does the future of nuclear medicine look like for the NMT?"

Although there are many opinions about what is happening in the field and what the future holds for the NMT, one thing is clear: Without the support of a professional organization, there would be no one fighting for the profession. It is my passionate belief that a strong SNMMI-TS (and SNMMI) ensures a strong profession. Since its founding in 1952, SNMMI has continuously engaged with stakeholders,

legislators, industry, and other professional organizations to ensure recognition, understanding, and appreciation for the unique contributions of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging to the diagnosis, understanding, and treatment of diseases. With the development of new therapy agents for precision medicine, the field is taking on an even more critical role in health care, and the society is advocating for the entire profession.

SNMMI is one of very few U.S. organizations that encompass an entire profession made up of different types of professionals. This diversity can pose some challenges, but I believe it is the reason we can and will be a strategic force of the future.

In the year ahead, as SNMMI-TS works to develop and finalize the new strategic plan, we will be looking at our unique qualities and focusing on what makes NMTs a crucial part of the medical team. We will be rolling out new member benefits and educational opportunities designed specifically for what our members need. They will cover knowledge and skills for career advancement, professional development, and maintaining certification and licensure. In addition, new tools for NMTs in the clinical setting will include quick reference guides, checklists, fact sheets, and clinical vignettes. We will be focused on the immediate needs of our member technologists and working to provide outreach to nonmember technologists on the importance of belonging to their professional organization.

I am excited to begin my year as SNMMI-TS president and to work alongside SNMMI as the society begins implementation of the new strategic plan in concert with the launch of the Value Initiative. SNMMI-TS will be working collaboratively with SNMMI to demonstrate the valuable role of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging in providing tailored, precise diagnostic and therapeutic care to patients.



**Kathleen Krisak, CNMT**