

At Home and Worldwide, Collaboration is Key for the Field of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging

Satoshi Minoshima, MD, PhD, SNMMI President

In the field of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging, collaboration is something each of us deals with on a daily basis, whether in research, clinical, or educational settings. It should come as no surprise that for the SNMMI, collaboration is recognized as one of the key components necessary to bring our value to patient care. For years, SNMMI has fostered collaboration among its members and peer organizations to globally promote practice, science, and education in nuclear medicine and molecular imaging.

At the society level, SNMMI offers members the opportunity to work with nuclear medicine and molecular imaging professionals from around the world through various committees, councils, and other working groups. Together, members tackle issues with appropriate use criteria, clinical guidelines, coding and reimbursement, radiopharmaceutical supply, and more. SNMMI also coordinates on these issues with national organizations, such as the National Institutes of Health, Food and Drug Administration, American College of Radiology, American Society of Nuclear Cardiology, and American Society of Clinical Oncology, among others.

Today, international collaboration is increasingly necessary to bring about meaningful progress in the field. SNMMI has taken a leading role in creating forums for international collaboration and has made it a priority to be an active participant in global matters involving nuclear medicine and molecular imaging.

SNMMI's Annual Meeting is a gathering place for the international nuclear medicine and molecular imaging community, with approximately 25% of its attendees from outside the United States. Each year, SNMMI invites nuclear medicine societies from around the world to organize and deliver educational sessions during the meeting. The Annual Meeting typically includes abstracts from 40–50 countries, and SNMMI recognizes the best abstract from each participating country during the meeting. In addition, at each Annual Meeting SNMMI selects a Highlight Country to deliver a presentation during the plenary session, organize continuing education sessions, and cohost the opening receptions. Past Highlight Countries include Japan, Germany, and China; the 2019 Highlight Country will be Canada.

Collaborating internationally on research and education is also a top priority for SNMMI. In 2017, 72% of all papers submitted to *The Journal of Nuclear Medicine* were from outside the United States. In addition, SNMMI and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have a long history of working together to offer educational opportunities. This year, SNMMI live-streamed educational content from the SNMMI Annual Meeting to participants in IAEA member

states. On an ongoing basis, SNMMI produces case review webinars (in multiple languages) for IAEA participants around the world, attracting as many as 200 listening sites in 60 countries for a single live webinar. In addition, SNMMI provides access to online learning opportunities for IAEA participants.

The SNMMI Clinical Trials Network (CTN) also has a large international presence. CTN has coordinated international trials through the funding agency Movember and has validated all the PET/CT scanners for the Medical Imaging Trial Network of Canada for a 2-year clinical trial. In total, CTN has validated scanners in 35 countries. Overall, the program has been well received by other countries. CTN representatives have met with leaders of the Chinese, Korean, and Australian/New Zealand nuclear medicine societies, all of whom have started their own versions of CTN.

SNMMI takes an active role representing its members' interests at the international level. A leader in the Nuclear Medicine Global Initiative, SNMMI has joined together with organizations from around the world to encourage global collaboration in education, harmonizing procedure guidelines and policies, and improving quality and safety. The Global Initiative has worked on topics such as pediatric nuclear medicine, the availability of radiopharmaceuticals, and theranostics. As a member of the World Federation of Nuclear Medicine and Biology Governing Council, SNMMI supports education efforts for nuclear medicine and molecular imaging, especially in the developing world. To ensure an adequate supply of ⁹⁹Mo, the society continues to partner with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and other global leaders. SNMMI also maintains relationships with like-minded organizations around the globe, including the European Association of Nuclear Medicine, Japanese Society of Nuclear Medicine, Korean Society of Nuclear Medicine, Chinese Society of Nuclear Medicine, and India Society of Nuclear Medicine.

Working together with our counterparts around the world allows us to have a bigger voice and a bigger impact. By creating a network to share expertise and knowledge both domestically and internationally, we can make significant progress in bringing value to the field. I look forward to ongoing cooperation and collaboration with our colleagues from around the world and hope to see all efforts presented at the 2019 Annual Meeting in Anaheim, California.



Satoshi Minoshima, MD, PhD