

## SNMMI Value Initiative 2.0—Advancing the Value of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging

In 2018, SNMMI launched its Value Initiative—a comprehensive strategic plan to advance the crucial role of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging in patient care and science and discovery. Since then, we have made significant progress on the plan, working with members and leaders of the society in collaboration with various stakeholders.

The Value Initiative addresses 6 critical domains. In the Quality of Practice domain, SNMMI has developed 10 appropriate use criteria (AUC) that have been completed or are nearing completion. These criteria will be hosted on leading Clinical Decision Support mechanisms to support our hospital-based practice in the United States when new Medicare regulations go into effect. Thirteen new or updated procedure standards—which are highly regarded as “gold” procedure standards—have been published or are under development. In addition, SNMMI and the American College of Radiology have initiated development of a joint clinical registry for nuclear medicine. Various initiatives of the SNMMI Technologist Section elevate our technical quality and patient-facing quality in day-to-day practice of nuclear medicine.

The second domain, Research and Discovery, distinguishes us as a leader of innovation in health care and imaging practice. SNMMI filed a New Drug Application for  $^{18}\text{F}$ FDOPA for congenital hyperinsulinism, which was accepted by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for priority review. The society hosted a Theranostics Consensus Conference in November 2018 that took solid steps toward outlining a pathway for regulatory approval of targeted radiopharmaceuticals and identifying data needed by government and private payers to support reimbursement. We are promoting the development of new instrumentation with physics and engineering experts and new imaging biomarkers with radiochemistry and radiopharmacy experts. *The Journal of Nuclear Medicine* is publishing more and more high-impact articles. These efforts will significantly enhance the value of our field in coming years.

In the Workforce Pipeline domain, SNMMI increased the number of resident members 5-fold within the past year. The society worked with “Chapter Champions,” exhibited at relevant medical society meetings, and created new resources for residents and medical students, including a new website. SNMMI also held a summit of nuclear medicine and nuclear radiology program directors and other thought leaders to discuss training and education. One significant advance we have made this year is to work with all stakeholders and experts in the field and support multiple pathways available

to trainees. The society provides strong support for Women in Nuclear Medicine and continues to enhance continuing medical education at its Annual Meeting, Mid-Winter Meeting, various webinars, and chapter and regional meetings. The impact of these efforts is enormous. The society is also programming various leadership programs for those who will take leading roles in advancing our field now and in the future.

SNMMI has been leading the field of imaging with outstanding outreach efforts. In the Outreach domain, SNMMI works very closely with patient and referring physician groups to educate their members about new treatments. Seven “roadshows” educated referring physicians, patients, and others about new advances, and a successful collaboration with UroToday resulted in more than 65,000 views of videos on imaging and therapies for prostate cancer. In addition, SNMMI’s Patient Advocacy Advisory Board participated in multiple Capitol Hill Day visits. We are extending our outreach efforts to hospitals and health systems in coming years. To demonstrate our value in patient care, outreach efforts are crucial.

For its Advocacy domain, SNMMI is working with a coalition to introduce legislation to obtain separate payment for high-value diagnostic radiopharmaceuticals. In addition, the society obtained new current procedural terminology codes for cardiac PET, worked with local Medicare contractors and private payers to supply data needed for appropriate coverage decisions, and submitted detailed input to government and regulators on critical nuclear medicine issues.

In the Organizational Strength and Stability domain, SNMMI is working to enhance its membership, its financial health, and the structure of the society. In particular, the leadership has been improving the society’s operational efficiency, sustainability, and member communications. Multiple initiatives focus on improving membership engagement, including the recent implementation of SNMMI Connect, the member communication platform. SNMMI is also strengthening the involvement of its board of directors and societal leaders in decision making and financial oversight of the society operations.

The field of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging is technically driven. Partnership with research and development industries can enable us to effectively translate today’s



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innovation into tomorrow's patient care. During the deployment of the Value Initiative, I was able to meet with strong industrial leaders who are genuinely interested in helping patients who suffer from cancer, neurological disorders, cardiac diseases, and many other conditions where nuclear medicine can be valuable.

As I conclude my presidency, I continue to ask questions: How can we encourage our members and stakeholders to promote the value of our field? What steps should we take to achieve appropriate reimbursement for our high-value care? How can we promote continuing innovation? How can we help secure and enhance the future of the nuclear medicine workforce and promote diversity and inclusion? The ever-changing health care landscape guides us as we develop strategies to meet these challenges. Ultimately, our goal is to increase the impact on patient care and research of our core value and expertise: nuclear medicine and molecular imaging.

Our next steps will become SNMMI's Value Initiative 2.0. In the coming year we will continue to work with all stakeholders to not only demonstrate the value of our field to others but also help bring value to the everyday practice of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging.

As part of Value Initiative 2.0 we will continue to adjust our organization to the changing health care environment. This includes seeking legislative changes for equitable reimbursement and addressing and analyzing complex and dated non-coverage policies. We will also support strong research for our future, continuing to advocate the importance of investment in research and development, exploring

new agents for diagnosis and therapy, and funding new research awards and grants for our members. We will enhance lifelong learning opportunities in nuclear medicine and molecular imaging for undergraduates and professionals as we continue our outreach to students and residents, create new education and training in theranostics, and provide educational offerings of the highest quality for all levels at the Annual Meeting. We have many more things to accomplish.

We hope to engage as many SNMMI members as possible in Value Initiative 2.0 through the work of various committees, working groups, and SNMMI chapters. And by streamlining the organizational structure of SNMMI, we will make our society more nimble and efficient.

In my mind, challenges are opportunities. By identifying these opportunities and developing strategies to meet them, we are taking a proactive role in advancing the field of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging. It is such an exciting time for our field, and by joining together we can make sure that the future is bright.

I would like to thank all hardworking volunteers, SNMMI staff, and partners for supporting our society, our field, and our future. I feel so lucky and honored to work with so many of you who share a common sense of missions and goals. Thank you so much.

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for radioiodine imaging are optimized and standardized; and (c) redifferentiation therapies enhance the effectiveness of  $^{131}\text{I}$  therapy.

- Major gaps in knowledge and evidence regarding optimal use of  $^{131}\text{I}$  therapy should be addressed with properly designed prospective studies.

The second Martinique meeting was held in March 2019. A mission statement was developed, indicating that the inter-societal working group will provide a forum to discuss differences in an open, honest, data-driven, and respectful manner. Such discussion should focus on areas of agreement and on disagreements that may result in meaningful differences in clinical management. The group will propose potential solutions and strategies to address those differences. The general aims of these meetings are to: continue collegiality, serve as a "think tank" to identify unmet questions and needs, provide a framework of terminology and a reference for practice guidelines, and provide a forum to discuss areas of agreement and disagreement. Proposed areas of discussion include: lack of data on early postoperative risk stratification, criteria

for success of therapy, pros and cons for dosimetry-guided  $^{131}\text{I}$  treatment, enumeration of practice differences among centers regarding postoperative risk stratification, development of a survey instrument for determining patient needs, development of a clinical trial on the benefit of postoperative evaluation with diagnostic radioiodine SPECT/CT imaging and dosimetry-guided  $^{131}\text{I}$  treatment in metastasized radioiodine-avid differentiated thyroid cancer, and identification of clinical trials to address unresolved issues at the core of current controversies in the management of thyroid cancer. These issues are reflected in Principles 8 and 9.

Preliminary proposed topics for the 2020 meeting include: further diagnostic assessment after thyroidectomy before deciding on whether to pursue  $^{131}\text{I}$  therapy, criteria for success of  $^{131}\text{I}$  therapy, and use of diagnostic scans after thyroidectomy in evaluation of differentiated thyroid cancer. These conferences represent a valuable and highly successful effort for SNMMI, particularly useful for nuclear medicine practitioners. We believe that this collaborative and forward-looking initiative should be continued and supported.