

## A Year of Successes and Challenges

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**T**he past year has been an extraordinary journey for me as president of SNMMI—a year of rewards and hard work, excitement and challenge, successes for SNMMI and progress for the nuclear medicine profession, interrupted by the pain and disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nuclear medicine science and practice sustained upward trajectories with further progress for both diagnostic and therapeutic agents and the continued rise of nuclear theranostics. The FDA approval in 2019 of  $^{68}\text{Ga}$ -DOTATATE and  $^{177}\text{Lu}$ -DOTATATE was a tremendous development for neuroendocrine tumor patients, for the nuclear medicine community, and for our growing role in multidisciplinary oncologic practice. Peptide-receptor radionuclide therapy is quickly becoming more available in the United States and is continuing to grow in Europe and beyond. In the past year, research has shown positive results for nuclear theranostics in an expanding number of cancers, and the potential for new theranostics has increased. With each step, nuclear medicine improves precision patient care and becomes a more critical element of cancer therapy.

SNMMI has moved along the same upward trajectory. In the past year, the society has worked actively to support the field and the profession. Our 2019 Annual Meeting drew top experts at the forefront of nuclear medicine research. We documented and, in many cases, provided the first publication of critical advances through the pages of *The Journal of Nuclear Medicine*, which ranks among the top medical imaging journals worldwide. We have worked tirelessly with government regulators and legislators to facilitate approval of new tracers, fair and equitable reimbursement for procedures, creation of a reliable domestic isotope supply, appropriate recognition of the skills and training required for a range of roles within our specialty, and many more issues. These efforts are seeing direct results in better understanding and support of the nuclear medicine field.

These successes were not achieved in a vacuum. SNMMI is both a leader and an essential member of a worldwide collaboration of organizations synergistically advancing the use of nuclear medicine techniques in more effective diagnosis and treatment of an expanding range of diseases and health conditions. The society has also accelerated communication with referring physicians, patients, and the public. These efforts will continue to reap rewards in coming years.

In 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic changed the world as we once knew it, creating difficult and sometimes heart-breaking personal and professional challenges for us all—clinicians, researchers, and patients. Through all of this, SNMMI has stood by to support all members of the nuclear medicine community, ready to provide the resources and services needed and dedicated to maintaining the responsive-

ness and flexibility to do so in a rapidly changing environment. We transitioned all in-person events, including our 2020 Annual Meeting, to virtual venues and added a large number of new and useful webinars, creating a true on-demand virtual curriculum. The society has seen a burst of involvement in virtual and digital activities, with webinar attendance doubling and even tripling and digital participation at an all-time high.

We rapidly launched the SNMMI COVID-19 Resource Center to communicate with our members and others on the best ways to provide high-quality and compassionate care for our patients while instituting measures to keep our colleagues and staff safe while doing so. We formed task forces for the society and the Technologist Section to answer questions from the community and provide webinars and useful articles. We initiated a special forum on SNMMI Connect for COVID-related discussion and sponsored additional targeted forums specific to issues of interest to scientists and pharmacists. We cooperated with the International Atomic Energy Agency and with the American Society of Nuclear Cardiology on guidelines and webinars.

Next month, SNMMI will hold its first-ever virtual Annual Meeting from July 11 to 14. This promises to be an innovative and enriching experience for us all. Moving from our planned in-person meeting in New Orleans to our first virtual Annual Meeting was a significant challenge, but we are excited to be able to offer cutting-edge, peer-reviewed scientific and educational content on a high-quality interactive platform. This will be presented in an easily accessible format that can be adapted to virtual attendees' schedules. This immersive and innovative experience will be free for SNMMI members.

For SNMMI, our members will always come first. Our goal is to support you, anticipate and respond to your needs, and act quickly, even when events take us all by surprise. We will come through these difficult times. Through the collaborative efforts of health professionals and researchers, nuclear medicine will forge ahead into a new, bright future.

I want to express my heartfelt appreciation to SNMMI's loyal and dedicated members, Board of Directors, and staff, who continue to work so effectively together to navigate around obstacles and keep us sailing smoothly on our true course.



Vasken Dilsizian, MD