

Addressing External Pressures to Advance Our Field: Quality, Education, and Membership—Priorities for Success!

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SNMMI-TS President

For 45 years, SNMMI-TS has been leading the development of the profession, meeting the needs of nuclear medicine technologists, and advancing the quality of patient care. During this time the SNMMI-TS has grown to include more than 9,000 members, and as the 2015–2016 president my goal is to ensure that this trend continues. The coming year will be critical for both the profession and the Section. For the whole Society, a strong goal is to sharpen the focus on quality in the profession. For the Section, my highest priority is to listen to members and prospective members; I want to hear what members want and need from the SNMMI-TS and encourage active and positive participation in implementing the resulting new programs.

As the national health care agenda becomes increasingly focused on evidence-based medicine, the nuclear medicine community continues to face external pressures, including continued scrutiny of patient radiation exposure, perceived overutilization of testing, decreases in reimbursement, and loss of technologist jobs (attributed, in part, to the nation's economy). SNMMI-TS, with its long history of focusing on high-quality patient care, is well equipped to lead the nuclear medicine technology profession in dealing with these issues.

In the past year, under the guidance of April Mann, MBA, CNMT, NCT, RT(N), FSNMMI-TS, the Section has created a new quality initiative with 2 goals: first, to develop and implement processes to raise awareness within the health care community of the value and benefits that nuclear medicine procedures provide in patient care and treatment, and second, to ensure that technologists have the appropriate training, competence, and credentials to perform these procedures in the new hybrid multimodality environment. These new processes and programs will begin rolling out in the year to come.

We are also excited to continue collaborating with our international colleagues to provide more training to students. We are working to develop an international exchange program that allows students hands-on experience with new developments within the profession, such as isotopes that have not yet been approved for use in the United States.

As one of the first Nuclear Medicine Advanced Associates, I have set another priority for the coming year of supporting graduate-level education focused on nuclear medicine and molecular imaging. With the projected shortage of physicians by 2020, a focus on graduate-level education makes sense,

especially in view of the evolving American health care system. It is time to map a strategy for moving forward.

One need that has been reiterated many times by SNMMI-TS members is continuing education opportunities. Members have access to a wide variety of free and low-cost continuing education programs, including a new webinar series that will provide the opportunity to obtain 1 free VOICE credit per quarter while focusing on timely issues affecting members' work. Members also have access to free continuing education credit from articles in both *The Journal of Nuclear Medicine* and *Journal of Nuclear Medicine Technology*. I intend to provide even more such opportunities in the coming year.

In addition, over the past few years SNMMI-TS has made several major changes with membership in mind, including the creation of the free-trial student program; the development of the graduation transition rate for students moving to becoming technologist members; a new free quarterly webinar; and, coming in September, a free mini e-book focused on myocardial perfusion. Although I believe we are taking the right steps to improve and grow our membership, we really want to hear from all of you. Through the work of the SNMMI-TS membership committee under the leadership of Dmitry Beyder, we will be reaching out to current members to identify potential new benefits that SNMMI-TS might provide and to get feedback on what you believe to be the most important aspects of your membership and what you would like changed. In addition, we will be boosting outreach efforts to nonmembers to determine what is keeping them from joining SNMMI-TS. Through our efforts this year, my goal is to grow and enhance our offerings to current members and to demonstrate the increasing benefit of becoming an SNMMI-TS member.

Over the past year, I have been lucky to work with the 2014–2015 president, April Mann, and I am grateful for her guidance. In the coming year, I will be joined by Sara G. Johnson, MBA, CNMT, RT(N), NCT, FSNMMI-TS, on the new SNMMI-TS leadership team. I am looking forward to an interesting and productive year.



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