

# TERC and NMT Evaluation: Report I

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As mentioned in earlier articles, TERC has undertaken an extensive evaluation of its activities in the field of nuclear medicine. The evaluation consisted of a survey of individuals involved in nuclear medicine and acquainted with TERC primarily through its products. Of the 400 questionnaires sent to individuals, 68 percent were returned. TERC would like to take this opportunity to report some additional findings regarding professional and institutional background characteristics of the respondents, their methods of keeping abreast of new developments, and their informational needs regarding NMT education/training.

## **Respondent and Institutional Characteristics**

Of those responding to the survey, 35 percent are technologists; 21 percent, physicians; and 13 percent, professors and instructors. Others replied that they serve primarily as technical directors, administrators, and physicists. As might be expected, the majority of respondents (67 percent) have their primary affiliation with a hospital. Approximately one-fourth have their primary affiliation with an educational institution.

Before their involvement in nuclear medicine, 31 percent replied that they were in the field of x-ray technology; 23 percent had been in radiology; 12 percent in internal medicine; and 15 percent had always been involved in nuclear medicine. Smaller percentages of the respondents reported that they had been in the nursing, medical technology, business, or teaching fields.

Respondents who worked in a hospital were asked a series of questions regarding the nuclear medicine staff. The data revealed that nuclear medicine exists as a separate department in 25 percent of the hospitals represented in the survey, but in 59 percent of the hospitals the radiology department has primary jurisdiction over nuclear medi-

cine. Regarding the nuclear medicine staff, 65 percent have five or less full-time staff members and 35 percent have six or more full-time staff members.

## **Continuing Education in Nuclear Medicine**

Respondents were asked to list the methods they use to keep abreast of changes in the nuclear medicine field. The vast majority of respondents mentioned professional meetings and journals as preferred methods for keeping up to date with new developments. Approximately one-third indicated that they had never taken a continuing education course in the NMT field. Forty-nine percent said that their most recent continuing education course was sponsored by one of the nuclear medicine professional or technical societies. A smaller percentage of respondents attended courses sponsored by hospitals (13 percent) and universities (13 percent).

## **Informational Needs**

Approximately half of the respondents expressed a need for information regarding NMT education and training. Curriculum-related information was the most frequently cited need. For example, one person wrote that he needed "detailed NMT curricula acceptable to the AMA". Respondents also expressed a need for information on manpower needs in specific regions, licensure requirements, and program planning.

TERC efforts in developing curriculum and planning guides are aimed at meeting some of these informational needs.

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