

MESSAGE FROM THE P R E S I D E N T

President Clinton's health care plan is now public. Allied health professionals, representing more than 60% of the health care work force, are scarcely mentioned. And nuclear medicine is not mentioned at all. Does that mean we are immune to the reform process? No.

Some change is inevitable, and these changes in the health care process will undoubtedly affect many areas of our practice. The Association of Schools of Allied Health Professionals (ASAHP) met with Clinton's Health Care Reform Task Force and identified the need to include allied health professionals in the process. ASAHP continues to drive allied health reform, using as an impetus the PEW Health Professions Commission Report, published in February 1993. The Coalition of Allied Health Professionals Task Force was created at ASAHP's July Summit Meeting on health care reform to give allied health professionals a forum in which to participate in the reform process. A statement entitled "Position on Enhancing Allied Health Involvement in Health Care Reform" was crafted by the Coalition, defining some possible solutions to issues such as manpower data and supply, educational systems, credentialing, and regulatory reform. An ASAHP Accreditation Reform Summit held in September reached a consensus that a more streamlined, cost-efficient accreditation process is needed. The leadership of the SNM Technologist Section (SNM-TS) must take an active role in this reform effort to avoid results that could harm the practice of nuclear medicine technology. In response to these concerns, I have appointed an SNM-TS Health Care Reform Task Force (Task Force), consisting of the chairs of the Academic Affairs, Continuing Education, Government Relations, Manpower Data, and Socio-Economic Affairs Committees, and members of the Executive Committee. The Task Force has met to establish strategies and set goals, and the Task Force committees will give progress reports on the following issues at the SNM Midwinter Meeting.

Accreditation Reform. The Task Force has recommended that the Joint Review Committee on Educational Programs in Nuclear Medicine Technology (JRCNMT) take an active role in the reform process. Fair representation for each autonomous profession is essential.

Multi-credentialed/Multi-level/Multi-skilled workers. Terms such as these are repeatedly identified in reform documents as the answer to the needs of the work force. Creative suggestions will be provided by a subcommittee of the Academic Affairs Committee.

Manpower Data Collection. To address supply, utilization, and distribution issues, the Manpower Data Committee will pre-



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pare a survey for review at the SNM Midwinter Meeting, including items such as education, type of practice, credentials, and vacancy rates.

Education Reform. The Academic Affairs Committee was directed to develop policies which will address the issues of core curriculum and minimum level of education.

Outcome Measurements: Education. Responses to letters to new graduates, attrition rates, funding effects, and scores on the Nuclear Medicine Technology Certification Board (NMTCB) examination were identified as important types of information to be gathered. The Academic Affairs Committee will collect and assess this information.

Outcome Measurements: Clinical Practice. The Socio-Economic Affairs Committee will write a letter to the SNM leadership stating the Technologist Section's interest in supporting a nuclear medicine clinical outcomes study.

Continued Competency. The Continuing Education Committee will evaluate this issue and determine its relevance to the practice of nuclear medicine technology.

Position Statements. A basic statement, educating the Clinton Health Care Reform Task Force on the practice of nuclear medicine technology and expressing our profession's support in the reform process, was developed by the Government Relations and Socio-Economic Affairs Committees. The statement was then revised by the SNM-TS Task Force and approved by the National Council. A more detailed statement, defining the SNM-TS position on health care reform, will be distributed to the National Council for revision and approval.

Health care reform was also addressed at a fall meeting of the Du Pont Technologist Advisory Board (TAB), providing an excellent forum for member reactions to these issues. On another front, the TAB has produced a scripted 40-slide program, "Understanding Nuclear Medicine," which will educate the public on the advantages of nuclear medicine.

The SNM-TS leadership is gearing up for a very active SNM Midwinter Meeting in Seattle, with committee meetings on February 3, 1994 and the National Council meeting on February 4. Any SNM member is welcome to attend. In addition to many important topics, the Strategic Planning Committee will seek National Council direction for future SNM-TS goals and objectives.

Please communicate with your national council delegate or chapter president, as they will continue to receive periodic information on all SNM-TS actions. In addition, you may obtain copies of the PEW report, Coalition of Allied Health position paper, SNM-TS position papers, and brochures that describe TAB projects from Virginia Pappas at the SNM central office.