

### Technologists and Nurses: Teamwork



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I'm tired. I'm tired of being told how things will be done because the nurses have decided how it will be done. I'm tired of having the nursing staff call my department and ask to speak to a "technician." I'm tired of the nurse knocking on the door and asking, "Is this a bone scan?" I'm tired of not being recognized as a professional by the nursing staff. I have to beg them to teach CPR and advanced life support (ALS) classes. As a matter of fact, in my hospital, I have to pay the nursing administration \$190.00 per person for ALS training. I thought we were all part of a team, but apparently one has to be a nurse to be on the team. I hear some of my colleagues complaining about the same thing. Some of them are even married to nurses and they complain about it too!

So who's to blame? It doesn't really make any difference, but I think it's our fault: we have no one to blame but ourselves. We let it happen. Now, what are we going to do to change it? We spend plenty of time telling ourselves who we are and telling the people who know who we are, but we don't spend very much time telling the rest of the health care world who we are, what we do and what our qualifications are. I think it's time we do that.

Health care reform is effecting us and we're working very hard to respond. I think we've been looking at health care reform as a threat rather than an opportunity. We need to take this opportunity to let everyone know that we are skilled, educated health care team players and that we need to be reckoned with. I believe the way to do that is by playing in their backyard. I think we should approach the American Nursing Association and begin a dialogue. We need to get on their annual meeting programs and educate them about our specialty. We need to work with them on issues where we can be mutually supportive. I would hope that the leadership of the technologist section will consider this approach and give it a try.

I think we can each play a part by working in our own states and institutions every time we see an opportunity to partner with the nurses and other health care professionals. Let's stop being so paranoid. We must forget our defensive attitudes and work on educating everyone about our profession. The team approach is the future in health care and we need to be prominent players on the team. This may mean that our jobs will change and we'll need to use skills which we have not used very often.

Nuclear Medicine Week would be a good time to begin this process. Why not hold an open house or a seminar for the nursing staff? Take the opportunity to teach, as well as to learn how to interact in a more meaningful manner with them. We need to make the other health care professionals aware of all our skills and abilities. We must teach them that we know anatomy and physiology; we have advanced computer skills; we have (dare I say it) nursing skills and we've been a part of a health care team for many years.

Let's stop complaining and start educating the nurses, then we can have real teamwork in our institutions between nurses and nuclear medicine practitioners.