

Over the past decade, the field of nuclear medicine technology has changed so dramatically that we now find ourselves wondering what our future as nuclear medicine technologists will look like. As we experience these changes, our identity will also evolve. Will we one day become known as molecular imaging technologists?

In November 2006, the SNMITS released the results of a study, “Nuclear Medicine Technologists in the United States: Findings from a 2005 Survey” (<http://interactive.snm.org/index.cfm?PageID=5703>). At that time, the results showed just how aware technologists were of the increasing demands and changes within medical imaging. The report specifically highlighted the following trends: evolution of medical imaging, increased importance of fusion imaging technologists, and a shift of nuclear medicine toward the practices of cardiology and oncology. Now, almost 5 years later, we are seeing those trends become reality for the field of nuclear medicine and, more keenly, for technologists.

Throughout the past 5 years, we have seen the Society of Nuclear Medicine evolve into “SNM: Advancing Molecular Imaging and Therapy.” SNM first introduced its new focus on molecular imaging in 2007. Since then, SNM has continually promoted the sound practice of molecular imaging and has increased awareness of this technology throughout the medical community and the public. Molecular imaging is safe and effective. It is playing an increasingly vital role in diagnosis and treatment, as well as measuring the efficacy of investigational therapeutics in clinical trials.

The SNMITS is embracing the changes in the field and working to ensure that its members are prepared for the emerging technologies of today and tomorrow. As a direct result of SNM’s 2005 Nuclear Medicine Technologist Survey, the SNMITS devel-



oped a recommended comprehensive curriculum (<http://interactive.snm.org/index.cfm?PageID=6553>) for nuclear medicine technology programs to ensure that all graduates entering the field receive the education necessary to be successful in a quickly changing environment.

The SNMITS was responsible for the idea and start-up of the Nuclear Medicine Advanced Associate degree. This Master’s-level program, which created a new career path for technologists, will allow them to continue to advance within the field. These professionals will be intimately involved in SNM’s Clinical Trials Network, with over 200 molecular imaging sites from around the world already registered. They will also work directly with nuclear medicine physicians, radiologists, cardiologists, and oncologists to improve patient outcomes.

In June 2009, the SNMITS approved a new mission, vision, and strategic plan. This 5-year strategic plan ensures the growth and advancement of the SNMITS, outlining specific initiatives that the SNMITS will develop to position nuclear medicine technologists at the forefront of the field.

Specifically, the SNMITS will work for the next several years to be the leading provider of resources and opportunities in educational advancement and professional development,

develop additional research opportunities for technologists in the form of funding and research fellowships, reorganize the SNMITS culture to be the repository of legislative and advocacy information on nuclear medicine and molecular imaging, provide resources to assist local or state organizations that represent nuclear medicine technologists with researching and obtaining state licensure requirements to practice nuclear medicine technology and perform CT examinations, work with states to establish uniform standards for approving continuing education (preferably a blanket acceptance of VOICE-approved continuing education credits), provide education for technologists working in clinical trials programs, create study guides for entry-level and specialty examinations offered by the Nuclear Medicine Technology Certification Board and the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists, and continue to create career-enhancing initiatives and programs for SNMITS members.

These initiatives, in addition to many others, will help to accelerate SNMITS members into the future. SNMITS leadership is dedicated to working diligently to ensure that every aspect of the strategic plan is fulfilled and delivered to our members. The SNMITS will continue to provide the best foresight and direction for the future while promoting the strongest level of advocacy and working to create and develop the highest level of educational programs—all to ensure a successful future for you. We hope that you will take advantage of the exciting new initiatives by renewing your SNMITS membership for 2010. Please visit the SNMITS website at [www.snm.org](http://www.snm.org) to renew today.

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