

Together, We Can Navigate the Future

**A Message from the 2009–2010
SNMTS President, Cybil J. Nielsen**



By the time you read this, I will have ended my term as president and turned over the leadership of SNMTS to Kathy Hunt, MS, CNMT, SNMTS president-elect. While faced with numerous challenges—including a technologist surplus and a ^{99m}Tc shortage—I reflect over this past year and immediately think about the amazing professionals within our field with whom I have had the opportunity to work. I am humbled to have been entrusted to lead SNMTS and hope that I have been able to meet your expectations. As president of SNMTS, I have been delighted by the dedication, experience, and enthusiasm that the society's leadership has for our profession. The SNMTS committee chairs, National Council of Representatives, and executive board members have exemplified the highest levels of knowledge and commitment to SNMTS and the profession.

Over the past year, through the efforts of the SNMTS committees, we have been able to complete the year-1 goals set forth in the strategic plan (<http://interactive.snm.org/index.cfm?PageID=1074>). Some of the highlights

of these achievements include the following.

The SNMTS Educators Task Force, chaired by Norman Bolus, MPH, CNMT, finalized the models for transitioning programs to adopt the SNMTS-recommended curriculum for nuclear medicine technology programs, which include CT and emerging technologies. The advisory board launched a pilot program, including 3 programs that will be guided through the transitioning process this year; letters of invitation have been received and accepted, and the programs have completed a gap analysis of the curriculum to determine the general studies or professional courses that need to be added to their programs. The advisory board is working to determine the best models for each program and has begun working directly with the program director and administration at each school to move the implementation forward.

With the recent awareness of increased radiation exposure and its effect on patients, attention has shifted toward studies that are performed by personnel who have not received proper education and training. As a result, the Consistency, Accuracy, Responsibility, and Excellence in Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy Act of 2009 (CARE bill) has gained momentum. Through the efforts of the SNMTS Advocacy Committee, under the direction of Danny Basso, CNMT, NCT, FSNMTS, action alerts have been distributed to SNMTS membership encouraging them to contact their representatives in Congress to support this bill.

If enacted, the CARE bill will ensure quality in medical imaging and radiation therapy procedures, reduce health care costs by lowering the number of procedures that need to be repeated because of poor technique or improper

positioning, and improve the safety of patients undergoing medical imaging and radiation therapy procedures. In addition to their efforts with the CARE bill, SNMTS just revised its position on nuclear medicine technologists operating PET/CT and SPECT/CT equipment. Beginning January 2011, the NMTCB and ARRT (N) exams will test examinees on concepts related to CT instrumentation and acquisition. This makes it even more important for nuclear medicine technology programs to incorporate cross-sectional anatomy, contrast media, CT physics and radiation safety, and CT instrumentation and protocols into their curriculum. For practicing technologists to perform procedures using hybrid CT equipment, SNMTS recommends 16 hours of CEU training on contrast media, radiation safety, CT physics, and cross-sectional anatomy.

Additional highlights include the third SNMTS/IBA Leadership Academy, which was held October 2009; a new outreach plan to local organizations; improved outreach to program directors, including a joint NMTCB/SNMTS program directors reception at the SNM annual meeting; development of the NCT and PET review study; and successfully planned educational offerings for technologists at the mid-winter and annual meetings.

Finally, and under Kathy's direction, the theme for the 2010 Nuclear Medicine Week was established—*Nuclear Medicine: Paving the Path to Personalized Medicine*. Nuclear Medicine Week, which takes place October 4–10, promises to be an exciting time, with many new products being offered. We encourage you to check the SNM Web site in mid-August for updates. In developing the theme for Nuclear Medicine Week, the task force also came up with the

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phrase “Got Tc-99m?” which became the theme for the 2010 awareness campaign promoting the domestic supply of ^{99}Mo .

With that said, I would like to welcome my friend, Kathy Hunt, MS, CNMT, as the new president of SNMTS.

Cybil J. Nielsen, MBA, CNMT
President, SNMTS

A Message from the 2010–2011 SNMTS President, Kathy Hunt



Beginning with my role as president-elect during the 2009 annual meeting in Toronto, I have had the honor to learn firsthand from the mentorship of Cybil Nielsen, MBA, CNMT. She has given an incredible amount of time, dedication, and effort to serve the nuclear medicine technol-

ogists whom she represents as the president of SNMTS. I would like to take this opportunity to applaud all of her numerous accomplishments. Now, a year later, it is with great excitement that I enter into the position as SNMTS president. I have come to truly understand the importance of the SNMTS membership to the ultimate success of our profession. SNMTS makes it possible for nuclear medicine technologists to have a voice on issues that have a huge impact on our field. This coming year, we look forward to continuing the SNMTS/IBA Leadership Academy to prepare the future leaders of our profession. The fourth annual academy will be held October 15–17. This year, SNMTS will have increased representation on SNM committees, councils, and centers—making technologist participation even more important than ever. Over the next year, SNMTS will continue to look to its membership for expertise in imaging modalities from CT to MRI and advocate for health care issues from credentialing to reimbursement. We have to ensure that our technologists have the tools necessary to maneuver in the changing world of health care. I believe that with the new SNMTS strategic plan as our guide and the dedicated technologists who serve their profession, SNMTS will continue to be the professional organization of choice for nuclear medicine technologists.

This past year has truly been a tough one for nuclear medicine technologists, as we are continually plagued by

the ongoing job and $^{99\text{m}}\text{Tc}$ shortages. The pending changes from health care reform and the slow recovery of the economy are not making this time any easier for us. SNMTS is doing everything it can to support its members during this time. We are constantly monitoring the evolution of health care reform and working diligently to secure the future domestic supply of ^{99}Mo . During the committee appointment process this past spring, I had the opportunity to appoint many dedicated, passionate individuals to pick up where our colleagues have left off. Over the next year, as we work through year-2 goals of the strategic plan, one of my goals is to call on many more SNMTS members to take the lead on working at the state level to further develop state licensure. Currently, only 26 states have established standards for nuclear medicine technologists, only 32 states have established standards for radiation therapists, and only 38 states license or partially regulate radiologic technologists. Although the road before us is long, the future is bright, and I invite you to stay along for the ride—I can assure you that even though it may be bumpy, we will come out on the other side stronger and better than ever!

On behalf of us both, I thank you for allowing us to serve you. We look forward to working with all of you in the future.

Kathy Hunt, MS, CNMT
President-Elect, SNMTS