

# The New Reality

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It's an interesting process, writing an editorial. Timelines for publication mandate the completion of the editorial many weeks before its actual publication, so under normal circumstances I would begin this editorial with a belated "Happy New Year!", but in these uncertain times, so much can, and hopefully will, change before this writing is ever published.

It's January 2021. In "normal times," we are remembering our holiday celebrations with family and friends as we put away the decorations for another year. We are looking forward with excitement to what the new year has in store for us. Our educational offerings provide us with the opportunity to gather together, share personal and professional information and just enjoy the company of our peers. We can't wait to block time on our calendars and schedule travel for those important events.

But wait! Reality check. . . . It is January 2021. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to ravage the world. Educational offerings remain in the virtual world, and Zoom meetings with our colleagues and friends have become the new normal. It's amazing to me that in such a short time how the world has learned to adapt, and for the medical community, to rise to the horrific challenges the COVID-19 pandemic has wrought.

But enough of the musing. The important message for this issue, and most likely for the remainder of the year, is that we will continue to adapt, to meet the challenges head on, and, from the perspective of the *Journal of Nuclear Medicine Technology (JNMT)*, to provide our readers with information that can continue to support professional growth and, whenever possible, improve skills to enhance patient and personal safety.

In this issue, 3 educational offerings focus on developing or enhancing skills or technology in a COVID-19 environment. The first discussion addresses the logistics of vaccinating the U.S. population using personnel working outside of nursing to assist in the vaccination process. Nuclear medicine technologists are uniquely qualified to assist in this aspect as intramuscular injections are within their scope of practice. Barnwell and Crosthwaite provide a summary of the COVID-19 vaccinations and provide links to access additional information, training, and self-assessment (2). Intramuscular administration of the 2 COVID-19 vaccines (Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech) is addressed in the Practical Protocol Tip (3). Re-establishing non-emergent care in nuclear cardiology laboratories continues to challenge both hospital and outpatient centers across the country. In the second educational offering, the American Society of

Nuclear Cardiology (ASNC), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and the Society of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging (SNMMI) offer best practices for nonemergent care in nuclear cardiology (4). The final COVID-related educational offering focuses on assisting nuclear medicine physicians by providing specifications and tips for setting up viewing stations for reading remotely from home (1). In a fourth continuing education article, the mechanisms of PET/CT image artifacts caused by the arms are discussed and solutions to reduce or eliminate them are suggested (5).

This issue also comprises a wide variety of topics including clinical imaging, oncology, instrumentation, and machine learning. The teaching case studies continue to present images that have been helpful with a diagnosis or demonstrate key facts or concepts in clinical nuclear medicine and molecular imaging. Additionally, this issue's Student Investigation, from a student in Pakistan, discusses the level of nuclear disaster preparedness of medical responders in his country (6).

Finally, it is with great sadness that we include memorials for two past presidents of the Technologist Section who passed away in 2020, Kathy Thompson Hunt and James Wirrell. Kathy and Jim were giants in their profession, beloved by their students, and will be sadly missed by all.

Thank you all for your continued dedication and perseverance in these difficult times. If you have suggestions or comments to enhance *JNMT* content, please contact me at [kstthomas0412@msn.com](mailto:kstthomas0412@msn.com).



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