

Priorities for the Coming Year

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As nuclear medicine technologists (NMTs) working in hospitals, clinics, private practices, academic organizations, research, or industry, we are faced with critically important decisions every day. The very nature of our job requires us to be highly trained and specialized professionals. Over the last decade, our scope of practice has changed and the entry-level curriculum has expanded; yet all of us, as nuclear medicine professionals, have continued to evolve and adapt to what is needed to ensure that we continue to provide the best patient care and outcomes.

As a clinical coordinator, I am acutely aware of how important clinical preceptors are to the success of the program and the students. The time commitment and the knowledge shared by clinical preceptors are unpaid and, in some cases, not acknowledged. Preceptors volunteer their time to train students and help to guide and shape these individuals into successful NMTs. The SNMMI-TS knows the efforts of these individuals is incredible, and sometimes the preceptors do not get all the training they would like or need to develop in their role. The SNMMI-TS has started work to create a program that will provide education to clinical preceptors, focused in 5 key areas: (1) education and training, (2) role as a facilitator—how attitudes motivate students, (3) assessment of clinical performance, (4) remediation, and (5) record keeping, confidentiality, and responsibilities.

A pressing issue for the SNMMI-TS is ensuring NMTs have the training they need to perform radiopharmaceutical therapy procedures. While the administration of therapies is part of the NMT scope of practice, the continuous approval of new therapies and trends makes it necessary to ensure that NMTs have the most current and cutting-edge education in this space. The SNMMI-TS is currently working to develop a radiopharmaceutical therapy supplement to the *Journal of Nuclear Medicine Technology* (JNMT), due out next summer. The supplement will focus on five therapies—I-131, Xofigo, Lu-DOTA, Lu-PSMA, and Azedra—and will include information on patient selection; clinical, technical, and regulatory considerations; protocols; radiation safety; dosimetry; imaging; billing; coding; and how to make the therapy a success. In addition, the SNMMI-TS is developing a comprehensive educational module for each therapy. Upon completion of these modules, technologists will be awarded a “badge” that can be displayed on their curriculum vitae, LinkedIn, and

other social media and professional platforms. The priority is to ensure that NMTs are trained and prepared to perform radiopharmaceutical procedures.

While in 2020 there was a decline in state legislation issues, 2021 is making up for lost time. Many state legislators are making moves and working to introduce new bills ahead of the fall session. The SNMMI-TS and the State Technologist Advocacy Group (State TAGs) are aggressively monitoring what is happening in each state and will continue their efforts to pursue licensure in every state and work to ensure that NMTs are protected and recognized under any new potential bill. Most recently, in California Assemblyman Freddie Rodriguez introduced *A.B 1273*, Interagency Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship: the Director of Consumer Affairs and the State Public Health Officer. Our SNMMI-TS Advocacy Committee acted quickly and submitted an *opposition letter* before the public hearing with the Health Committee. The harmful piece of legislation is now scheduled to go to California’s Senate for vote this summer, so we are calling on our members to act quickly to oppose it. Legislation like this bill, and so many others that have been introduced over the last several years, is the exact reason why the SNMMI-TS’s advocacy efforts are crucial to the sustainability of the profession.

Finally, as I look towards the 2022 Mid-Winter Meeting scheduled for Orlando, FL, in January, I am hopeful that we will be able to come together face-to-face. This coming year, 2022, marks the 5th and final year of the SNMMI-TS strategic plan. While there have been many accomplishments this year, we are eager to plan and embark on what the future of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging has in store for the SNMMI-TS. This coming January the SNMMI-TS leadership, board, and key committees will come together to begin the planning and development of the new strategic plan. This new plan will guide the SNMMI-TS through the next five years and beyond.

The field is growing rapidly, and I am excited to be part of such a dynamic and future-driven organization.



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