
Letters to the Editor

RESPONDING TO CONCERNED TECHNOLOGIST.

In reading the June issue of *JNMT*, I gave special attention to the editor's comments about technologists, the Technologist Section President's call to move the 40% Society membership that the Technologist Section represents to interest and action, and last but not least Concerned Technologist's plea to his/her peers. In a very positive way I am getting the distinct feeling that somebody is trying to tell me something.

As Editor Weigand points out, "We are the direct link to the patient; none of us should lose sight of that fact," but then you read Concerned Technologist's letter and you begin to wonder if it isn't too late for some of us. The technologist has and will continue to be the "person in the middle" and will be again on the radiopharmacy issue—maybe it "goes with the territory." But along with that territory goes some instincts that tell you when to become more attuned to problems—trouble in the jungle, so to speak.

Concerned Technologist asked some relevant and pointed questions. If you read them with confidence and knowledge of the answers, good for you. If you didn't you'd better consult a colleague and see how he fared—maybe you have a problem on your hands. There is probably no "right" group for these kinds of questions to originate with—but good old middle person has been here before and knows that it smells like another *Catch 22*. One group will accuse us of starting a witch hunt to avenge the usurpers of our hot-lab empires; another might be the first to chastise us if carelessness or misjudgement affect patient care or physician confidence in our team efforts to produce first-rate studies because of radiopharmacy unknowns like the ones mentioned by Concerned Technologist.

One question that Concerned Technologist didn't ask, but which seems basic to whether or not you perceive your radiopharmacy as a help or hindrance, is who replaced you in the driver's seat—a radiopharmacist (or at the least a pharmacist with background and training in

radionuclides) or some sophomore English major working part-time to help pay his or her way through college?

Concerned Technologist and other named and unnamed technologists, let's take the first step in evaluating our present and future: let's not be as Editor Weigand suggests headed for a life of jack-of-all-trades and master-of-none! Good radiopharmacies of the world enlighten us—bad ones BEWARE—middle person is getting a distinct territorial message!

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This is in reply to the letter in the June 1979 issue of the *JNMT* concerning commercial central radiopharmacies. First, let me state that we have been using a commercial radiopharmacy for over three years, and I personally find it indispensable.

There seems to be a great reluctance within any profession to give up what it considers to be part of its job. Philosophically speaking, this reluctance does not seem to run through our society. How many people know how their car engine works? How dependent are we on other people for our energy, our food, etc? We seem to be willing to depend on other people for our very survival, but then we draw the line irrationally at giving up certain parts of our job. I ask you: How dependent are you now upon radiopharmaceutical suppliers, upon airlines and freight companies? Will you really be giving up much independence if you rely on a commercial radiopharmacy?

In our case, the commercial radiopharmacy has allowed us to provide much better service. The pharmacy receives four generators, thus insuring an always-ready supply of technetium. Before we began using the pharmacy, we had several instances of coming in Monday morning, only to find that our generator had been shipped somewhere else. The commercial pharmacy does such a volume of business that it can stock many isotopes that we as a single institution could not afford. Now, if a doctor decides at 2:00 pm that he would like an I-131