
Letter to the Editor

Nuclear Medicine Technologists—Where Have They Gone?

I am responding to Mr. Aldridge's letter in the December 1980 *JNMT* entitled "Nuclear Medicine Technologists—Where Have They Gone?" as an education coordinator of an accredited Midwestern school close to Wichita. I sympathize with Mr. Aldridge's problems in recruiting. We Midwesterners could not draw NMTs from the East even if we posted a billboard on the outskirts of Philadelphia.

Mr. Aldridge may indeed attempt to recruit from accredited schools in his locale but he may not be considering other factors, such as the background or financial status of the students. Students often choose to work in the city where they attended school or return to their home town for a few years to build up money reserves so they can afford to relocate.

I received notice of the opening at Wesley Medical Center in December 1979. At least 15 other notices of openings were received prior to graduation time. Some of these may have been more appealing to the students. Mr. Aldridge has just not reached the technologist who

sees the beauty of Wichita, let alone Wesley Medical Center.

Another factor for Mr. Aldridge to consider is the competition of large nuclear medicine centers with smaller hospitals and mobile units, which did not exist a few years ago. Students today are more independent and confident in their knowledge of nuclear medicine; this leads them to seek work in smaller hospitals where they do not feel lost in a crowd or last in line for promotion.

I do not agree that the solution is the proposal of Nuclear Medicine Assistants (NMAs). Rather, let the schools do their job of educating for the profession. More schools may be needed—but not another rung on the ladder. True, enrollment may fluctuate from year to year; however, we must be careful not to lower our standards for educating competent NMTs. How long do you suppose it would take an NMA to think he or she could do a technologist's job? Then we would be right back to on-the-job training being a main source for NMTs.

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