



SCANNER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ACNP

MAY/JUNE 2005

INSIDE

Government Relations Report . 2

Profiles in Nuclear Medicine:
Thomas A. Verdon, Jr., MD, FACNP. 3

ACNP Residents Organization . 4

Residents as Future Leaders . . . 4

SAVE THE DATE!

February 18–19, 2006
32nd Annual Meeting
of the ACNP
Ft. Lauderdale, FL

February 17

“Residents as Future Leaders” meeting
Reception for all attendees

Outstanding speakers and over
16 hours of CE credit planned

This weekend format, in conjunction with the President’s Day holiday on Monday, was chosen to make it convenient to attend. The accommodations in lovely South Florida are beautiful! Most of the lectures will focus on state-of-the-art PET/CT and CT. Oral and poster sessions are planned for resident abstract presentations. We look forward to seeing you there!

Scanner is published by the American College of Nuclear Physicians, 1850 Samuel Morse Drive, Reston, VA 20191, and online at <http://www.acnponline.org>.

Editor-in-Chief: Simin Dadparvar, MD
Managing Editor: Ann Coleman

President’s Message: ACNP Tells Congress DOE Cuts Threaten Future of Nuclear Medicine Research

I attended the American College of Radiology (ACR) annual meeting, in Washington, DC, from April 10 through 14. One of the highlights of the meeting is the day we visit Capitol Hill in droves to deliver our message to the senators and representatives who make the laws that affect our profession. The three issues that the ACR wanted us to discuss with our members of Congress and their staffs were: (1) self-referral and overutilization of imaging services, (2) fixing the Medicare conversion factor, and (3) tort reform. The last two issues were also on the agenda last year.

While I was glad to discuss these topics with staffers (the representative or senator is rarely present), acknowledging that it is important to “stay on message,” I also thought that the Department of Energy (DOE) funding issue for nuclear medicine research was of paramount importance and should be mentioned. Therefore, I brought it up with a member of one senator’s staff and with my representative so that they are aware of the issue and understand its importance. In fact, while the other issues are important, I believe that the DOE funding issue is the most important of all. I left Capitol Hill with the satisfaction of knowing that they at least understand the issue and its importance to the nuclear medicine community.

For those of you who need a refresher, DOE proposed a budget for the coming year that eliminates \$25 million in funding for nuclear medicine research that has been awarded yearly as part of their Medical Applications and Measurements Science Program. This is support for basic science research in nuclear medicine that has been largely responsible for developing such essential tools of our profession as the $^{99}\text{Mo}/^{99\text{m}}\text{Tc}$ generator, ^{201}Tl Cl for myocardial perfusion imaging, and PET imaging, especially with ^{18}F -FDG. The ACNP and SNM have been working to try to get this funding restored to the DOE budget for next year. In my opinion, this has been one of the most successful programs in the DOE—and in the entire government—and the potential for more breakthroughs is fantastic. This funding must be restored, and it is important for our Congressional representatives to know this and be supportive.

Several years ago, ACNP had meetings in Washington, DC, generally in September or October, during which we coordinated visits to the Hill to advocate on issues of importance to nuclear medicine. I am hopeful that we can revive those efforts. I believe that our senators and representatives want to hear from us, their constituents, and in general would like to help us, if possible, in the right circumstances.



Bennett S. Greenspan, MD, FACNP
ACNP President

Bennett S. Greenspan, MD, FACNP
President, ACNP

ACNP Government Relations Report

DOE Budget Cuts Update

The ACNP/SNM Public Affairs Department has been very busy with the Department of Energy (DOE) budget cuts issue since the last edition of *Scanner*. Over the past month we have submitted written testimony to hearings of the House Energy and Water Development Subcommittee (the primary appropriations body in the House of Representatives dealing with the DOE budget), visited the offices of dozens of members of the House Energy and Water Development Subcommittee, and sent targeted e-mails to ACNP and SNM members in key battleground states. The nuclear medicine community has responded at the grassroots level with roughly 3,000 messages to Capitol Hill.

On April 20–21, Alan B. Packard, PhD, and the ACNP/SNM Public Affairs staff made a presentation at the DOE Biological and Environmental Research Advisory Committee (BERAC) meeting. BERAC is a body of independent scientific advisors to the DOE Office of Science Biological and Environmental Research (BER) division, the sector of DOE directly in charge of the Medical Applications and Measurement Science Program. Last year's official BERAC recommendation to enhance the radiopharmaceutical sciences programs and facilities within BER were fundamentally ignored by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) when the president's proposed budget cuts were rolled out in February. Suffice to say, we can expect an extremely sympathetic crowd within the BERAC group. The immediate objective of the presentation is to draw further government (and press) attention to our needs for basic nuclear medicine research funding at the DOE and to let BERAC know that the nuclear medicine community is paying attention to the actions they take.

For more information and to see how you can help, please check the ACNP Web site at www.acnponline.org.

FDA Draft Guidance for Exploratory IND Studies Announced

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) released the draft guidance document, "Guidance for Industry, Investigators and Reviewers: Exploratory IND Studies," that was announced in the April 14 *Federal Register*. (You may download the draft guidance from the ACNP Web site at <http://acnp.snm.org/index.cfm?PageID=3891>.)

The draft document notes that, depending on the study, the preclinical testing programs for exploratory IND studies "can be less detailed and more flexible than for traditional IND studies." In addition, the document clarifies what preclinical and clinical approaches (including chemistry, manufacturing, and controls) should be considered when planning exploratory IND studies in humans, such as studies of closely related drugs or therapeutic biological products under an investigational new drug application (21 CFR 312).

Clinton's "Dirty Bomb" Legislation

ACNP/SNM staff and leadership met with Senator Hilary Clinton's office on April 8 to discuss the language within her "Dirty Bomb" legislation, as it was introduced in the 108th session of Congress. Although this legislation has not been reintroduced in the 109th Congress, the goal of the visit was to

have Clinton's staff modify the legislation *before* the bill is put into play.

NRC Issues Amendments to Specialty Medical Board Certification Criteria

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is amending the criteria used by the NRC and Agreement States to recognize certifications conferred by professional specialty boards on applicants for various medical radiation safety positions.

In a final rule to be published soon in the *Federal Register*, the NRC implements several changes to 10 CFR Part 35, "Medical Use of Byproduct Material," based upon recommendations by the NRC's Advisory Committee on the Medical Uses of Isotopes (ACMUI) and the Agreement States. The changes should make the process of recognizing boards by the NRC or Agreement States more efficient. ("Agreement States" are the 33 states that have agreed with the NRC to regulate the medical and industrial uses of byproduct material.)

"These changes to the certification criteria will continue to ensure the safe use of radioactive material by medical licensees while improving the process of recognizing board certifications," said Jack Strosnider, director of the NRC's Office of Nuclear Materials Safety and Safeguards. The final rule provides specialty boards more latitude in making the determination that an individual is fully trained and capable of performing duties related to radiation safety.

The revised requirements include a degree from an accredited college or university, professional experience, passing an examination conducted by the specialty board, and specialized training. The specific degree level and amount of training and experience required vary depending on the position. The NRC will publish the procedures for recognizing specialty boards, as well as the list of those whose certifications meet the criteria, on its Web site instead of in its regulations. This will make it easier to change the list to add or remove boards.

A proposed rule outlining the changes was published Dec. 9, 2003, in the *Federal Register*. The agency received 27 comments on the proposed rule; those comments and the agency responses will be summarized in a forthcoming notice. The changes become effective 30 days after publication.

ACNP/SNM State Health Policy Liaisons

State Health Policy Liaisons (SHPLs) are crucial players in the political activities of the ACNP and SNM. SHPLs help advance federal and state legislation in their respective states and essentially represent the most politically active element of the nuclear medicine community. SHPLs are often called upon by the ACNP and SNM to perform special tasks such as contacting Congressional staff, writing and faxing letters to their legislators, or teaching lobbying tactics to the nuclear medicine community. Currently, SHPLs are focused on the CARE bill and technologist state licensure issues as well as the DOE nuclear medicine budget cuts.

Would you like to be a SHPL? Simply e-mail Michael Peters, mpeters@snm.org, and ask that your name and contact information to be added to the ACNP/SNM SHPL list.

Michael Peters
Assistant Director, SNM/ACNP Public Affairs

(Continued on page 3)

Profiles in Nuclear Medicine: Thomas A. Verdon, Jr., MD, FACNP, Nuclear Medicine's Ambassador to Clinicians

Thomas A. Verdon, Jr., MD, is an inspiration to ACNP members who have worked with him and witnessed his dedication to our specialty, his visionary leadership, and his friendly professionalism.

I first got the idea to train in the new specialty of nuclear medicine in 1969 from an internal medicine grand rounds lecture by Tom, who at the time was a colonel in the U.S. Army Medical Corps and chief of nuclear medicine at the prestigious Letterman Army Medical Center located at the Presidio of San Francisco.

Thirty-five years later, at a time when most of his contemporaries have fully retired, Tom is still lecturing about the clinical uses of nuclear medicine and telling young doctors how they can enter our exciting specialty.

Through the Professional Outreach Program (POP), Tom has also educated the world of clinicians about the many benefits nuclear medicine offers their patients. Dr. Tom Verdon became the perfect "Ambassador from Nuclear Medicine" as his friendly and engaging manner brought our message to literally thousands of family practitioners and internists at their regional and national meetings.

The POP program was developed by ACNP after Tom and Dr. Dick Holmes created a concept program and obtained early industry support. Eventually, this very successful program was jointly sponsored by every nuclear medicine professional organization and funded by the former ACNP Corporate Committee, which evolved into the Nuclear Medicine Industry Association, North America.

Tom has had a long and illustrious career. He was awarded a bachelor of science degree in pharmacy from Fordham University and his MD from Saint Louis University School of Medicine. He then entered the Army Medical Department, where he was trained in internal medicine at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and subsequently trained in nuclear medicine at the Donner Laboratory at the University of California, Berkeley.

Dr. Verdon had a decorated medical career in the U. S. Army, where he was chief of nuclear medicine and internal medicine at top-level hospitals throughout Europe and the United States. His natural leadership ability led to his selection for command positions at numerous army medical facilities in the United States and Europe, including combat zones such as Vietnam and the former Republic of Yugoslavia.

Tom also had a wide-ranging and successful civilian career in nuclear medicine, including private practice and academic practice as director of nuclear medicine at the University of Missouri.

In addition to his many professional accomplishments, Tom has managed to create a great family life with his wife Joan and their five daughters and twelve grandchildren and has also managed to find the time to indulge his passion for professional baseball.

All who have ever crossed his path or worked beside him in an exhibit hall know the enjoyment of sharing time and visionary goals with such a warm, generous, loyal, dedicated, and energetic professional as Dr. Tom Verdon. He surely sets a grand example for all of his colleagues in nuclear medicine. It has been my profound privilege to work beside Tom on many occasions, and each time I have come away with new inspiration.

Robert Lull, MD, FACNP



Tom Verdon (right) with Bill Carroll. Bill was Tom's helicopter pilot in Viet Nam. The two had not seen each other in over 20 years until they ran into each other as Tom was manning the POP booth at an Academy of Family Practitioners meeting in Lake Tahoe, NV.

ACNP Government Relations Report

(Continued from page 2)

Technologist Issues—CARE Legislation

The ACNP/SNM, together with the Society of Nuclear Medicine Technologist Section (SNMTS), is pleased to announce that the Consumer Assurance of Radiologic Excellence (CARE) bill was reintroduced in the U.S. House of Representatives on March 17 by Representative Charles "Chip" Pickering, Jr. (R-MS).

The CARE bill is designed to establish federal education and credentialing standards for personnel who deliver radiation therapy treatments and perform medical imaging procedures (except diagnostic medical sonography). The CARE bill will help reduce the risk of medical errors associated with misdiagnosis or the misadministration of radiation. This will in turn ensure that quality information is presented for diagnosis and should reduce health costs by lowering the number of medical imaging procedures repeated due to improper positioning or poor technique as well as improve the safety of medical imaging and radiation therapy procedures.

At the time of this writing, HR 1426 currently has 61 cosponsors (including Representative Pickering) and has been referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. The number of cosponsors has been increasing since the ASRT's annual legislative action days, "RTs in DC," April 11–13. Several members of the SNMTS leadership attended this event representing nuclear medicine: Nanci Burchell, Val Cronin, David Perry, David Gilmore, Randy Ryder, Harish Vaidya, and Lyn Mehlberg. You can view the list of CARE bill cosponsors (updated in real time) at <http://thomas.loc.gov>. Enter the bill number (HR 1426) and then click on BILL SUMMARY AND STATUS.

ACNP, SNM, and SNMTS hope to see the RadCARE bill (the Senate version of the House's CARE bill) reintroduced by the time you read this issue of *Scanner*.

Lyn Mehlberg, BS, CNMT, FSNMTS

ACNP Welcomes New Members

Tristen E. Eckersberg-Rhodes, MD, Bronx, NY
Dominick Lamonica, MD, Buffalo, NY
Yvette I. Sheline, MD, Saint Louis, MO

ACNP Residents Organization



Henry Kim, MD

Please remember to apply to the ACNP Mentorship Program that was launched by Simin Dadparvar, MD, at the second meeting of ACNP's Residents Organization held during ACNP's 31st Annual Meeting in January 2005 in San Diego, CA. This mentorship program is offered free to ACNP resident members. The nuclear medicine trainee (i.e., resident, fellow, or researcher) will be matched with a junior or senior ACNP faculty member who will guide them in preparing for future job opportunities in academic centers, private practice, and/or industry. This support system augments, rather than replaces, the guidance by nuclear medicine residency program directors. Applications are still welcome! For further information on finding the mentor of your choice, please do not hesitate to go to ACNP's Web site. You can find more information on finding the mentor of your choice at www.acnponline.org.

Dan Sigg, MD, PhD, who is the resident at the VA-GLA hospital in West Los Angeles, CA, gave a talk on "The Future of Nuclear Medicine from a Resident's Perspective," which was published in the January/February 2005 issue of *Scanner*. Dr. Sigg's talk was very well received by the nuclear medicine community. He serves as the treasurer/secretary of our Residents Organization.

In the past few months, the ACNP Residents Organization has been working through several ideas suggested by the attendees at the San Diego meeting, and we are getting ready to implement some of the new activities. We welcome any volunteers who wish to play an active role in shaping their future careers in nuclear medicine, especially trainees at residency programs in the Midwest, Southwest, Mid-Atlantic, and New England areas. It's not too late to suggest new programs and activities, so please



Dan Sigg presented "The Future of Nuclear Medicine from a Resident's Perspective."

feel free to contact us.

Also, please help spread the word among your trainees about the free ACNP membership for residents/fellows (free the entire time you are in training), made possible by generous industry support, which is subsidizing the \$50 annual membership fee. You may download the new, simplified membership application form from the JOIN/RENEW section of the ACNP Web site at www.acnponline.org.

Finally, please join us at the ACNP Residents Organization session at the upcoming SNM 52nd Annual Meeting in Toronto. Many long-time nuclear medicine practitioners, experienced junior and senior ACNP members, and program directors will be attending to assist with the ACNP Mentorship Program, job networking, and other aspects of your career development. Because our agenda is still being developed, your input and suggestions are still welcome. Please feel free to contact me at henrykimmd@yahoo.com with any ideas, feedback, and questions. Help the ACNP Residents Organization to help you better. Hope to see you in Toronto!

*Henry Kim, MD
President, ACNP Residents Organization*

Residents as Future Leaders

At ACNP's 31st Annual Meeting, the nuclear medicine residents from the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania (UPenn) presented the highest number of abstracts for the second consecutive year. In fact, during last year's and this year's award ceremonies, three of the five ACNP travel grants/best essay awards were presented to UPenn residents.

The success of each nuclear medicine resident in the residency program heavily depends on the resident's efforts as well as the direct supervision and enthusiasm of the residency program director. ACNP

would like to extend special thanks to Abass Alavi, MD, for his continuous, tireless effort in encouraging residents to participate and present their updated research at various national and international meetings.



Abass Alavi, MD

Congratulations to all abstract presenters who attended the ACNP's 31st Annual Meeting. Our best wishes to all nuclear medicine residents in training; we hope to see you at the ACNP's 32nd Annual Meeting in Fort Lauderdale, FL, next February.

Simin Dadparvar, MD, FACNP

Annual Mentorship Award

ACNP values your assistance in making the residency mentorship program a success. The college has created a "Best Mentor of the Year" award for presentation at the ACNP's annual meeting. The award will recognize an outstanding mentor who has been selected by resident/fellow participants in the program at the end of each year. Mentors must be ACNP members.

Your participation in this important program will help generate outstanding leaders for nuclear medicine in the future.