

June, 2014

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**President’s Message**

The Academic Council continues to demonstrate its resilience, vitality and activity in the tradition of service, innovation and support to education in Nuclear Medicine and to the Nuclear Medicine Program Directors. This year has

**Leonie L. Gordon, MD, FACNM**



been busy with many changes in resident education with the introduction of ACGME New Accreditation System and milestones which become effective July 1, 2013.

The Academic Council had another successful year at the SNMMI Midwinter Meeting in Palm Springs. We had excellent attendance at the session entitled Sustaining Education and Practice in Today’s Environment where we discussed milestones, clinical competency committee’s role and structure, the value of other new ACGME mandated committees, roles and interrelationships of professional organizations and how they impact nuclear medicine education. Dr Richard Gunderman was a keynote speaker and he discussed the psychology of effective teaching.

Although the Council is stable financially, membership appears to be decreasing despite efforts to recruit members--especially those involved in education. The Nuclear Medicine Program Directors Association (NMPDA) continues to be a vital part of the Academic Council, and is chaired by Daniel Lee, MD, who is committed to improving communication between nuclear medicine program directors.

We have many exciting educational opportunities at the annual meeting in St Louis this year. On Saturday evening the academic council together with the YPC is presenting a SAM session on Achievement of Item Writing Excellence. The session will be interactive and focus on how to become more skilled in writing questions that test knowledge effectively. On Tuesday the Academic Council will present a session on Bone Densitometry. Since the meeting is in St Louis, we are fortunate to have Dr. Diemar, who is a recognized expert in bone densitometry together with Dr. Wallis, present a session bone densitometry and osteoporosis. We also will have the Tom Miller memorial lecture which will be on Tuesday at 12:30 pm on Quality in Nuclear Medicine: How to define it and how to measure it. The session will be presented by George Segall and Henry Royal. Dr Tom Miller was very active in nuclear medicine education until his untimely passing. He practiced nuclear medicine at Washington University in St Louis and made many contributions to the SNMMI and the specialty.

I would like to thank the Academic Council Board members for the hard work over the past two years while I have been president. It has been a privilege and pleasure to work with such a dedicated group. I know the Academic Council will continue to flourish under the able leadership of Jon Baldwin.

*Leonie L. Gordon, MD, FACNM  
 Academic Council President*

## Secretary's Message

**Tracy L. Yarbrough, MD, PhD**



As my term as Academic Council Secretary comes to a close, I sincerely hope that you have found the recent issues of the newsletter to be interesting and informative, and I look forward to seeing you all in St. Louis. Ciao!

*Tracy L. Yarbrough, MD, PhD  
Academic Council Secretary*

## NMPDA President's Message

At the 2014 Mid-Winter Meeting of the SNMMI, NM PDs discussed program options for combined nuclear medicine and diagnostic radiology programs at five institutions approved by the ABNM, which has actively promoted combined modality residency training and sought pilot programs. The institutions with approved programs are University of Arkansas (UAMS), Emory University, University of Michigan, Saint Luke's-Roosevelt (SLR), and Stanford University. UAMS, Michigan and SLR have proposed and/or initiated 4-year imaging programs to provide a minimum of 16 months of NM within the context of DR residency, and Stanford has initiated a 5-year imaging program incorporating research. Emory proposed both 4- and 5-year programs providing more clinically-oriented training and clinical and

research-oriented training, respectively.

Discussion was spirited, with many questions about the practical implementation of combined training. Whose residents are the trainees, DR or NM? How are candidates recruited, through a dedicated NRMP Match or post-Match processing? How are the positions funded? What might become of NM residency programs that train mostly—or exclusively—residents that “belong” to/graduate from DR? How can we comply with competing requirements such as MQSA? Differing concepts of combined training were presented, and some programs are further along than others. SLR and UAMS have already matched residents into their programs.

Many questions remain, and we will learn from each other. The NMPDA meetings at the Mid-Winter and Annual Meetings will provide a forum for the exchange of ideas, best practices, and learning experiences. Hopefully, we will have additional institutions explore the possibility of offering combined training.



**Daniel Lee, MD**

We will continue the discussion in St. Louis in June, and I expect that we will again have an active discussion as we hear updates from the various programs. I hope to see you there. Please come with your questions.

*Daniel Lee, MD  
NMPDA President*

## YPC Update

The Young Professionals Committee (YPC) is composed of the young professional members of SNMMI who are within 10 years of completion of training. The YPC is a networking and social group for young professionals, as well as the voice for young professionals to SNMMI leadership. We organize numerous events at the SNMMI Annual and Mid-Winter meetings. YPC members also play an active role in supporting the mission of SNMMI with involvement in a number of society activities.

At the 2014 SNMMI Annual meeting the YPC is hosting several events on Sunday June 8<sup>th</sup>, which include the CMIIT/YPC joint Early Career Development and Transitional Panel Discussion at 1030am, followed by the YPC business meeting and YPC-NMRO luncheon at 1130am. This year, the YPC-NMRO Knowledge Bowl will immediately follow the luncheon. We will also be co-sponsoring two CE sessions; Achievement of Item Writing Excellence for SAM questions at 430pm on Saturday June 7<sup>th</sup> and Impact of Changing Regulatory and Fiscal Environment on Nuclear Medicine Practice at 1230pm on Sunday June 8<sup>th</sup>.

For those of you who are SNMMI young professionals, I invite you to join YPC – membership in the YPC is free! The YPC is a great way to network with other young professionals and become involved in SNMMI.

If you have any questions about YPC or would like to become more involved, please email me at [yokell.d@gmail.com](mailto:yokell.d@gmail.com)

*Daniel L. Yokell, PharmD, RPh*

## NMRO Update

The NMRO is gearing up for our Annual Luncheon on Monday, June 9<sup>th</sup> at 11:30am. This year we will be presenting an informative session about a plethora of changes in the ACGME and how they will be affecting nuclear medicine residents. We will also be announcing our new Board of Directors for 2014-2015. Other annual meeting events include teaming up with the Young Professionals Committee for the YPC Annual Knowledge Bowl and our third NMRO-YPC Networking Event!

On May 22<sup>nd</sup>, we presented our most recent Virtual Journal Club, which offered CME credit for participants. The topic was Zevalin, and the presentation was given by current NMRO Vice President Prashant Jolepalem.

Signing up for membership in the NMRO is now easier than ever. Resident's can self-register online, or program directors can register for them! International residents are also able to join! Please visit our website at [www.acnmonline.org](http://www.acnmonline.org) and click on the Resident's tab for more information.

*Erica Cohen, DO, MPH  
ACNM NM-RO President*

## A Word from the SNMMI Guidelines Committee

It is no surprise that the practice of medicine and medical imaging is changing on many fronts, from technological to political. It is challenging to keep up with these changes, particularly as the playing field also keeps changing.

The Guidelines Committee of the Society of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging has been particularly affected by these changes. It should be no surprise that as the technology and political landscape changes, the SNMMI membership looks for guidance about the proper way to do imaging procedures to assure that our patients are

cared for to the best of our ability, but also to make sure we are reimbursed so that we can be paid for our services, keeping adequate staffing and equipment inventory to provide optimal care.

In the past, the Guidelines Committee has worked hard to keep SNMMI membership informed of the proper way to perform imaging studies and nuclear medicine therapy. Our efforts have been focused on meeting the needs of our membership. However, recent changes in the political landscape have required us to look again at how we develop and maintain guidelines.

The reimbursement landscape is changing such that guidelines prepared in the "old" way, while they may be helpful to our membership, are not being seriously considered by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for reimbursement. The reason for this is that CMS is pushing to have all practice guidelines be evidence-based. That is, guidelines advocating a particular process need to be backed by evidence that the particular process described in the guideline improves patient outcome.

This raises particular challenges for our procedure guidelines, namely the mandate for evidence-based medicine more easily applies to Practice Guidelines than it does to Procedure Guidelines (description of acceptable ways to perform a procedure). Secondly, because technology is evolving so rapidly, demonstrating outcomes improvement for a particular procedure/camera/imaging protocol over another is all but impossible. By the time a particular protocol is studied and validated (often requiring years), self-evident improvements in the technology have already been adopted and the results of the validation study are irrelevant.

To address these issues and to ensure our studies are a true benefit to our patients and to make sure our efforts are properly reimbursed, a new Committee has been established at SNMMI, the Guidelines Oversight Committee (GOC). This Committee will oversee procedure guideline development as well as explore contributions we can make not only to descriptions of nuclear medicine procedure best-practice, but also to insure Nuclear Medicine is appropriately consid-

ered, (in accordance with available evidence) when medical Practice Guidelines are written by other specialty societies. In addition, the SNMMI GOC will be investigating opportunities for taking the lead in developing Appropriate Use Criteria, as SNMMI has already successfully done with brain amyloid imaging.

There are many challenges ahead of us, but the challenges also bring forth new opportunities to demonstrate the critical role nuclear medicine plays in patient care.

For more information on SNMMI guidelines and Appropriate Use Criteria, please visit the Guidance Document page of the SNMMI at: <http://www.snmmi.org/ClinicalPractice/content.aspx?ItemNumber=10817&navItemNumber=10786>

*Kevin Donohoe, MD  
Chair, SNMMI Guidelines Committee*

## A Message from the Executive Director, American Board of Nuclear Medicine

Dr. Henry Royal completed a 10-year term as Executive Director on March 1, 2014. Henry presided over a period of unprecedented change in Nuclear Medicine, including the introduction of hybrid imaging and development of non-radioactive molecular imaging techniques. He strengthened the board as the primary certifying organization for Nuclear Medicine physicians in the United States. He was, and continues to be, an eloquent spokesperson and effective advocate for the highest standards of training, initial certification, and continuing competency. He is also a visionary, and set ABNM on a path that will guide us for the next 10 years.

ABNM has been working with the American Board of Radiology (ABR), Accreditation Council for Gradual Medi-



**George Segall, MD**

cal Education (ACGME), and professional societies, to provide the future medical workforce with the knowledge and skills needed for a changing specialty. An important part of this effort is the promotion of dual training in Nuclear Medicine and Diagnostic Radiology. ABNM has recently revised the eligibility requirements for initial certification exam to make it easier for residents to get 16 months of Nuclear Medicine training during 48 months of Diagnostic Radiology residency. Sixteen months of training is now defined as a minimum of 310 days of classroom or clinical experience (equivalent to 62 weeks, 5 days per week), not counting holidays and leave of absence for any reason. The 310 days may include a maximum of 44 days of elective study

in any discipline or location, at the discretion of the Program Director. There is no longer any requirement for a minimum block of contiguous Nuclear Medicine training time. Leave of absence may be taken at any time in accordance with the policies of the training program, as long as the minimum number of training days is obtained. It should be noted that these guidelines apply only to eligibility for ABNM certification. Residents and Program Directors should check with the ABR for eligibility requirements for Nuclear Radiology certification.

Maintenance of Certification™ was introduced by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) in 2000, and all 24 member boards had a 4-part process to support continuous professional development by 2006. ABNM is working on improving MOC to make it easier for physicians to self-direct education to improve knowledge and skills. The changes that have been made include substitution of a 5-year retrospective review of participation in place of a cumulative requirement, and acceptance of types 2 and 3 AMA Category 1 Credit (Self-Assessment CME) to meet the annual requirement of 8 hours of self-assessment. Changes have also been made to make it easier for physicians certified by more than one board to participate in MOC. More information can be obtained from the current ABNM newsletter "Tracers," available at: [https://abnm.wordpress/uploads.s3.amazonaws.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2014-1\\_ABNM\\_Tracers.pdf](https://abnm.wordpress/uploads.s3.amazonaws.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2014-1_ABNM_Tracers.pdf).

ABNM is arranging a meeting with leadership of the ACGME Nuclear Medicine Residency Review Committee, and SNMMI (including Academic Council and Nuclear Medicine Program Directors group) at the SNMMI Annual Meeting in St Louis. This meeting will ensure good communications and coordination of activities so that we all go forward together. I would be especially pleased to hear your ideas. You can send your suggestions to [abnm@abnm.org](mailto:abnm@abnm.org).

*George Segall, MD*  
*Executive Director, ABNM*

## **DATES OF INTEREST\*\***

### **Grant and Award Deadlines:**

#### ***NIH Standard Application Deadlines:***

June 5, 2014—new RO1

June 12, 2014—new K-series

June 16, 2014—new R21

For more information on these and other grant opportunities, go to <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/submissionschedule.htm>

#### ***SNMMI Grants, Awards and Scholarships***

May 31, 2014--PDEF Professional Development Scholarship

May 31, 2014—SNMMI-TS Advanced Practitioner Program

May 31, 2014—SNMMI-TS Bachelors Degree Completion Scholarships

May 31, 2014—Susan C. Weiss Clinical Advancement Scholarships

June 30, 2014—SNMMI-TS Graduate Program Application (institutions only)

July 1, 2014—2015/16 SNMMI Postdoctoral MI Scholar Program

For more information on these and other grant opportunities, go to <http://interactive.snm.org/index.cfm?PageID=1083>

### **Upcoming Educational Meetings and Training:**

#### ***American Society of Clinical Oncology Annual Meeting***

May 30-June 3, 2014

Chicago, IL

<http://am.asco.org/>

#### ***SNMMI Annual Meeting***

June 7-11, 2014

St. Louis, MO

<http://interactive.snm.org/index.cfm?PageID=13055>

#### ***American College of Radiology (ACR) Leadership Institute Summit***

August 7-10, 2014

Wellesley, MA

<http://www.acr.org/Education/RLI>

#### ***American Society for Radiation Oncology ASTRO Annual Meeting***

September 14-17, 2014

San Francisco, CA

<https://www.astro.org/Meetings-and-Events/2014-Annual-Meeting/Index.aspx>

#### ***American Society of Nuclear Cardiology Annual Meeting***

September 18-21, 2014

Boston, MA

<http://www.asnc.org/asnc2014/index.cfm>

#### ***Annual Congress of the European Association of Nuclear Medicine***

October 18-22, 2014

Gothenburg, Sweden

<http://eanm14.eanm.org/>

#### ***Radiological Society of North America (RSNA) Annual Meeting***

November 30-December 5, 2014

Chicago, IL, USA

<http://www.rsna.org/Register.aspx>

### **Other Items of Interest:**

#### ***RSNA Academy of Radiology Leadership and Management***

<http://www.radleaders.org>