



The growing importance of continuing medical education in nuclear medicine: the role of the European School of Nuclear Medicine

Peter Lind¹, Istvan Szilvasi², Francesca Pons³, Luigi Mansi⁴, Alberto Cuocolo⁴, Klaus Tatsch⁵, Cornelis Hoefnagel⁶, Valerie Lewington⁷, Jean Noel Talbot⁸, Emilio Bombardieri⁹, Alan Britten¹⁰, Gerrit Weestera¹¹, Van den Brook¹²

¹ Dean of the European School of Nuclear Medicine, Department of Nuclear Medicine and Endocrinology, PET/CT Center Klagenfurt, LKH Klagenfurt, Klagenfurt, Austria

² Budapest, Hungary

³ Barcelona, Spain

⁴ Naples, Italy

⁵ Munich, Germany

⁶ Amsterdam, The Netherlands

⁷ Sutton, UK

⁸ Paris, France

⁹ Milan, Italy

¹⁰ London, UK

¹¹ Zürich, Switzerland

¹² Nijmegen, The Netherlands

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The importance of continuing medical education (CME) in nuclear medicine is increasing because credit hours will be mandatory in the future. In addition to the scientific presentations at the annual congresses, the current knowledge on the most important topics in nuclear medicine should be offered to the nuclear medicine community. In 2000, the “new” European School of Nuclear Medicine (ESNM) was reorganised with the aim of bringing all the educational activities of the EANM under one umbrella. In addition to the “core members” of the ESNM (Lind, Mansi, Pons, Szilvasi; e-mail addresses

displayed), the chairpersons of the most important task groups of the EANM are also members of the School. The educational activities of the ESNM can be divided into three categories:

1. Organisation of CME at the annual congress of the EANM
2. Organisation of Central and Eastern European seminars in nuclear medicine
3. Further development of the PET Learning Centre

CME at the annual congress

Since the EANM congress in Naples, CME has been provided throughout each congress in the form of four 90-min CME sessions on each day, organised by the Dean of the School. As topics should not only be of interest to nuclear medicine physicians, special tracks have also been organised for physicists and radiopharmacists since the Vienna congress. Each member of the School organises one track of CME at the EANM congress. As the chairpersons of most task groups are members of the ESNM, the interests of the EANM task groups are taken into consideration when choosing the topics for CME. The positive response to the CME at the annual congress

Peter Lind (✉)

Dean of the European School of Nuclear Medicine,
Department of Nuclear Medicine and Endocrinology,

PET/CT Center Klagenfurt, LKH Klagenfurt,
St Veiterstrasse 47, 9020 Klagenfurt, Austria

e-mail: peter.lind@lkh-klu.at

Tel.: +43-463-53829100, Fax: +43-463-53823184

in Vienna 2002 encouraged us to make available the best-attended and best-evaluated sessions as powerpoint presentations on the web page of ESNM. Since the Amsterdam congress in 2003, all tracks of CME are available on the ESNM web page (<http://www.eanm.org/esnm>).

At the last two annual EANM congresses, CME was the best-attended part of the meeting. A total of 674 attendees participated in Vienna, the top five subjects being:

- 345: Sentinel nodes
- 330: Cardiology
- 273: Thyroid cancer
- 247: Radionuclide therapy
- 233: FDG PET in oncology—interactive

In Amsterdam, there was a total of 530 attendees, the top five subjects being:

- 177: Therapy
- 175: Breast cancer
- 152: Cardiology
- 151: PET/CT
- 127: Lymphoma

As for past congresses, for the upcoming EANM congress in Helsinki the ESNM will receive accreditation from the European Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (EACCME). By virtue of a reciprocal agreement between EACCME and the American Medical Association (AMA), the credits granted by EACCME are recognised as a Physician's Recognition Award by the AMA.

The CME topics are announced by the end of each year, and the detailed programme, including the lectures with educational objectives, summaries, keywords, chairperson and speakers, is available on the web page by the end of March; extended abstracts become available on the web page at the end of May. Since the Amsterdam congress, an abstract book has also been available at the meeting for the attendees.

Central and Eastern European seminars in nuclear medicine

The second aspect of ESNM activities is the organisation by the Vice-Dean of the education of young colleagues in Eastern and Central Europe. During 2003, three seminars were organised in Opatija, Prague and Budapest. In 2004, seminars are being held in Cesme, Warsaw and Cluj, as detailed below.

Seminars in 2003

24th Seminar

11–13 May 2003, Opatija, Croatia

Local organiser: D. Dodig, Zagreb

PROGRAMME

Clinical PET (P. Lind, Klagenfurt)

Risk in NM Practice and Procedures (C. Reiners, Würzburg)

Therapy in NM (A. Bischof-Delaloye, Lausanne)

Neuroimaging in NM (D.C. Costa, London)

Participants: 54; Countries: 7

25th Seminar

27–28 June 2003, Prague, Czech Republic

Local organiser: J. Kubinyi, Ostrava

PROGRAMME

Molecular Imaging (I. Virgolini, Vienna)

Oncology (Diagnosis) (K. Hoefnagel, Amsterdam)

Thyroid (Diagnosis and Therapy) (H. Fritzsche, Feldkirch)

Therapy (Excluding Thyroid) (M. Fischer, Kassel)

Participants: 68; Countries: 8

26th Seminar

24–25 October 2003, Budapest, Hungary

Local organiser: I. Szilvási, Budapest

PROGRAMME

Molecular NM (F. Bengel, Munich)

Cardiology (A. Cuocolo, Naples)

Therapy (E. Henze, Kiel)

Inflammation–Infection (F.H.M. Corstens, Nijmegen)

Participants: 67; Countries: 10

Seminars in 2004

27th Seminar

29 April–1 May 2004, Cesme (Izmir), Turkey

Local organiser: L. Kabasakal, Istanbul

PROGRAMME

Nuclear Oncology Using SPECT (Z. Burak, Izmir)

Nuclear Oncology Using PET (P. Lind, Klagenfurt)

NM in Neuropsychiatry (K. Tatsch, Munich)

NM in Thyroid Disease (S.E.M. Clarke, London)

28th Seminar

7–8 May 2004, Warsaw, Poland

Local organiser: K. Toth, Warsaw

Topics: Therapy, Oncology, Nephro-urology, Radiopharmacology

29th Seminar

23–24 October 2004, Cluj, Romania

Local organiser: D. Piciu, Cluj

Topics: Instrumentation, Endocrinology, Cardiology, Oncology

At these seminars, a distinguished faculty gives an overview on selected topics in nuclear medicine which will be of relevance for the young colleagues attending these meetings. At the end of the meeting, which is co-sponsored by EANM and industry, the attendees have the possibility of taking part in a multiple-choice examination to check their knowledge in nuclear medicine.

Further development of the PET Learning Centre

Last year, the PET Learning Centre was established by the EANM in Vienna under the auspices of the EANM president. The great success of the PET courses encouraged the EANM to continue with these courses in 2004. As not all European colleagues are familiar with the English language, especially for the purposes of discussing interesting problems adequately, delivery of such courses in other European languages is being considered. As an example of this, in October 2003 a PET learning course was organised in the German language, and was well attended. At the end of 2003, a re-evaluation meeting on the quality of the powerpoint presentations delivered in the PET courses took place in Vienna, chaired by the EANM president. The layout of the presentations will be unified and the content restructured according to the rules decided at this meeting. The case studies will also be updated within the next year. For the future, this PET

learning course will also be under the umbrella of the ESNM.

There is also intensive contact with the EBNM Fellowship Committee, currently chaired by Francesca Pons (core member of ESNM), regarding the fellowship examination. The current members of the EBNM Fellowship Committee are:

- Francesca Pons, Chair (Spain)
- Trund Velde Bogsrud (Norway)
- John Buscombe (UK)
- Savvas Frangos (Cyprus)
- Pierre Olivier (France)

The EBNM work for the fellowship examination includes:

1. Information for candidates
2. Application forms
3. Updated syllabus
4. Examples of questions from the 2003 examination

Summary

In summary, the ESNM provides educational activities not only for young colleagues but also for established nuclear medicine physicians. There is also close contact with physicists, radiopharmacists and technologists. In the future, more interactive education and increasing activities on the web are planned. On behalf of all members of the School, I (P.L.) would like to thank Andrea Bauer and her team at the executive secretariat in Vienna for their professional help in organising the meetings and hosting the ESNM.