The nuclear medicine technologists' scope of practice (SOP) was revised and approved in June 2011 and the clinical performance standards were revised and approved the following year. Both of these documents can be found on the SNMMI website under the Technologist Section. These documents are critical to our profession as the medical community adjusts to changes associated with health care reform and hybrid imaging. The SOP Task Force falls under the Technologist Section Advocacy Committee. One of the charges of this group is to review and identify changes that need to be made to these documents in order for them to continue to addresses the current skills, education and practice of the nuclear medicine technologist. The task force also has the responsibility of addressing SOP questions from our membership and from liaison or regulatory agencies.

On April 27, 2012, Florida Governor Rick Scott signed House Bill 309 which went into effect July 1, 2012. This bill allows for the recognition and licensing of "specialty technologists." This law is of particular interest to the nuclear medicine community for several reasons. The first is that it will allow certified nuclear medicine technologists who are not radiographers but have passed the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (CT) exam to perform diagnostic CT in the state of Florida. It does not exclude licensed radiographers from performing CT procedures if they are not CT certified. The new law also allows radiographers who are not certified as nuclear medicine technologists but have passed the Nuclear Medicine Technology Certification Board PET exam to perform PET procedures. The new law does not exclude licensed nuclear medicine technologists from performing PET procedures if they are not PET certified. The new specialty license law passed unopposed and is seen in a very positive light for technologists and facilities alike.

The language of the law is written that “each specialty designation must be consistent with the technologist's national certification” and “the duties must be within the national organization's scope of practice.” The Florida Bureau of Radiation Control is reaching out to the American Society of Radiologic Technologists (ASRT) and SNMMI for these documents. A scope of practice and practice standards already exist specifically for CT as defined by the ASRT. However, a SOP specifically for PET does not yet exist.

The SNMMI-TS charged the SOP Task Force with the goal of creating a SOP and clinical performance standards specific to the PET technologist who is not a certified nuclear medicine technologist. This detailed document will be similar in style to the SOP and clinical performance standards that already exist for nuclear medicine technologists, but will only outline the duties of a PET technologist. The task force is attentive to the fact that the language used in the PET clinical performance standards should not exclude nuclear medicine technologists who are not PET certified from performing PET procedures. The Task Force's goal is to present the PET SOP and clinical performance standards to the SNMMI National Council of Representatives (NCOR) for consideration at the Mid-Winter Meeting in New Orleans, LA.

As chair of this Task Force, I would like to recognize Nancy McDonald DeLoatch, NCT, RT, CNMT, and her working group, Tricia Peters, BS, CNMT, PET, and Cindi Luckett-Gilbert, MHA, CNMT, PET, FSNMMI-TS, for their hard work in addressing this need with such expediency.