

▶ Controversies in Competencies, Accreditation and Education

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The work of Nuclear Medicine Technologists (NMT) and Radiographers (NMR) is not carried out by a single professional group since there is a great variety of different competencies, education and national regulation in any different European Country. National laws are supreme judges on tasks and educational requirement of professionalists working in Nuclear Medicine. In all cases they are highly specialised and they work alongside other healthcare professionals to play highly responsible roles in patient care, management, imaging and radiation protection.

They may also have significant non-imaging roles within the radiopharmacy and laboratories, that may overlap significantly with other profession in these specific fields.

EANM Technologist Committee (EANMTC) started in 1998 a long process of definition and harmonization of procedures with the aim of having a consensus definition of tasks and education that may apply to all European Nuclear Medicine realities, defining high quality standards in procedures and patient care. Many actors came in play bringing ideas, energy but it was impossible to avoid controversies.

Definition of NMT were heavily discussed and the outcome is still a matter of debate at national and international level. Competencies may vary depending on national regulations, like education can be really different from country to country. And also many national realities face the problem of having Post-Graduate Education as much as Continue Education without an efficient program of certification and accreditation.

EANMTC strongly believe that harmonization of education and competencies will lead to a great advancement in daily practice and patient care in all Nuclear Medicine realities in Europe.

Also in merged education, it is important to set highly detailed standards for Nuclear Medicine practice, to be added at more generic skills and other imaging competencies.

Hybrid imaging must be approached by competent professionalists able to deal with technological advances, patient and staff safety, clinical requests and quality assurance.

This review will focus on Challenges to be faced creating a consensus document, to prevent road-blocks in this path, that may only cause discomfort in European NMTs.

Suggested readings:

- 1 EANM: Competencies for the European Nuclear Medicine Technologist - 1998
- 2 Euro-American Discussion Document on Advanced Practice, Waterstram-Rich K.J. Nucl. Med. Technol. 2011;39:240-248.
- 3 http://www.estro.org/binaries/content/assets/estro/school/european-curricula/recommended_core_curriculum-radiationtherapists---3rd-edition-2011.pdf
- 4 <http://www.a3es.pt/en/about-a3es/strategic-planning>
- 5 Competencies for the European Nuclear Medicine Technologist. 1998. http://www.eanm.org/committees/technologist/tech_eurocom.pdf
- 6 International Atomic Energy Agency: Nuclear medicine resources manual. 2006. IAEA, Vienna
- 7 European Parliament Council, RECOMMENDATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning. Official Journal of the European Union, C 111/01 (2008).