Advanced Practice in Nuclear Medicine: Employer survey results

Methodology
In August, 2007 a ten-question survey was distributed to employers or supervisors of nuclear medicine technologists in Arkansas to ascertain employer interest in an education program for advanced practice in nuclear medicine. A follow-up survey was conducted in January 2008 of a more limited audience (clinical education sites for the Nuclear Medicine Imaging Sciences program in Arkansas).

Results
Summary: Eight surveys were returned for a response rate of 66.7%. The central, northwest, and southwest parts of the state were represented among the respondents, with the majority representing a general nuclear medicine department in a hospital setting.

Thirty-seven percent of the respondents agree that agreed that there was need for a Master of Imaging Sciences degree program in Arkansas; 50% were undecided. Only one respondent felt this type of program was unnecessary, although that same respondent felt that an advanced practitioner would be helpful in a cardiology setting [rather than a hospital setting]. Many respondents indicated a sense of uncertainty as to the role and/or education of advanced practice technologists. Respondents who currently employ a Radiologist Assistant (RA) expressed strong interest in educating and employing a nuclear medicine advanced practitioner.

The following represents detailed results for each item on the survey.

1. Which of the following best describes your practice setting?
   - 55.5% Hospital setting, general nuclear medicine
   - 0% Outpatient Imaging Center Rural
   - 0% Outpatient Imaging Center Urban
   - 11.1% Cardiology Practice
   - 22.3% PET Imaging Practice
   - 11.1% Other (oncology)

2. How many nuclear medicine technologists are employed in your group department?
   - Average number 4
   - Median number: 3
   - Mode: 4
   - Range: 1-13

3. How many physicians in your group practice are board-certified in nuclear medicine?
   - Average: 2.12 (range from 0 to 6)

4. How many physicians in your group practice are board-certified in cardiology?
   - Average: 1.28 (range from 0 to 26; average excludes practice with 26)
5. Does your department currently employ a nurse practitioner or a physician assistant?
   25% Yes
   75% No

6. Do you agree there is a need for a Master of Imaging Sciences degree program that would prepare graduates in advanced practice in nuclear medicine in Arkansas?
   12.5% Strongly Agree
   25% Agree
   50% Undecided
   0% Disagree
   12.5% Strongly disagree

7. Would you be interested in having a nuclear medicine technologist in your department become an advanced practice nuclear medicine professional?
   25.0% Extremely interested
   12.5% Mildly interested
   25.0% Uncertain
   25.0% Mildly disinterested
   12.5% Not interested at all

8. Would you be interested in participating in the education of advanced practice nuclear medicine professionals by being a clinical site?
   25.0% Extremely interested
   00.0% Mildly interested
   37.5% Uncertain
   00.0% Mildly disinterested
   37.5% Not interested at all

9. Would you be interested in hiring a graduate from a program for advanced practice in nuclear medicine?
   25.0% Extremely interested
   00.0% Mildly interested
   50.9% Uncertain
   12.5% Mildly disinterested
   12.5% Not interested at all

10. In what part of the state is your facility located?
    37.5% Northwest Arkansas
    00.0% North Central Arkansas
    00.0% Northeast Arkansas
    37.5% Central Arkansas
    25.0% Southwest Arkansas
    00.0% Southeast Arkansas