



Who's Who in Nuclear Medicine: Michael Reitermann, President, Nuclear Medicine Division, Siemens Medical Solutions

The future of nuclear medicine is dependent upon the reciprocal relationship between industry, science, and medicine. In this profile we talk with the new president of Siemens Medical Solutions' Nuclear Medicine Division, Michael Reitermann, about the challenges of growing a nuclear medicine business and the future of the industry in general.

How did you develop an interest in the medical products business?

Before I joined Siemens Medical, I worked in the Siemens in-house consulting group. During those years, I learned quite a bit about the different Siemens divisions. Then, when the opportunity came to join the Medical Group, I already knew it was a fascinating business. Now, having been a part of Siemens Medical for the past 4 years, I can confirm this. What really motivates me is that, at the end of the day, we make a difference in the lives of patients.

What do you see as the main marketing challenges for the Nuclear Medicine Division?

On the PET side of the business, the primary marketing challenge is to continue the growth of the PET market, both in the U.S. and internationally. The major issue is increasing the awareness of the physician community and educating them about the power of PET and the possible applications. I think the physicians who are working with PET scanners today are quite aware of the power of PET. The issue is with referring physicians. There are many, many CT scans done in oncology, but only a fraction of oncology exams include PET scans. More physicians need to understand the capabilities of PET in the oncology arena. That's one of the challenges that we jointly share with the SNM.

The second issue is reimbursement. In oncology PET is reimbursed for quite a few cancer types, but in other areas, like neurology, reimbursement for PET studies is not forthcoming. These issues need to be addressed by the SNM and by physician organizations.

Another one of our major tasks is to position ourselves in the gamma camera side of the market. The fastest growing market in the U.S. is the nuclear cardiology market.

What can we expect from the next generation of fusion scanners?

Last year we introduced a brand new system at RSNA. The Biograph Sensation 16 PET/CT scanner will start shipping in May 2003. It's a high-end PET system with a 16-slice CT scanner attached. Here I see potential for new clinical applications in oncology and also in cardiology-like a one-stop-cardiac exam where you have the potential to do full diagnostic CT coronary angiography as well as PET perfusion and viability in one study.

Beyond the next generation of scanners, what kind of research and development are you pursuing?

On the PET side, new detector technologies and concepts will be the innovation drivers. Equally important are advances in application software, physician reporting, and connectivity to PACS, RTP (radiation treatment planning), etc. One of the most demanding characteristics of PET/CT is the sheer number of slices that a physician has to read through. We have unique solutions for managing this data and are working with leading institutions worldwide to arrive at the most efficient and optimized method for presenting it.

This also holds true for the gamma camera side: Here we will continue to bring new applications to market that will make a clinical difference. The overall Siemens Medical Solutions philosophy is to integrate the different departments in a hospital and improve the

