

Nuclear Cardiology Working Group Director's Handbook

A Guide to Establishing Your Local Working Group

May 1, 2003

The ASNC Board is committed to grassroots nuclear cardiology education and networking opportunities as well as the ongoing development of new working groups. ASNC offers a variety of services to nuclear cardiology working groups, many of which are detailed later in this handbook (see page XX) and on the ASNC website (www.asnc.org).

One of those services is assistance in helping new groups get started. While established groups are knowledgeable about planning activities, soliciting and receiving funding and interacting with local members, those wishing to create new nuclear cardiology working groups have often found the process confusing or overwhelming. This brief handbook is provided to offer some guidance for those situations.

Following is a narrative from one working group director on his experience establishing a local group. We hope that you will find it, and the rest of the handbook, useful.

David G. Hurrell, MD
Minneapolis Heart
Institute
July 26, 1999

Establishing a Local Working Group - One Group's Experience (Upper Midwest Working Group)

While there are literally thousands of social clubs and bowling leagues throughout the world, I was at a loss when I wanted to organize a nuclear cardiology working group. I didn't even know where to start. Given that you may face similar questions and concerns in organizing your working group, I have written down a few of my experiences, which may assist you along the way.

Stake out your turf

Presently there are a number of working groups around the world. Many were not established using pre-defined geographic boundaries. Therefore, it is important that you first establish which if any working groups exist near you and then carve out a region that you think is appropriate. It is important to consider travel time and accessibility for your future attendees¹.

Pick a name

This should be rather straightforward and

¹ ASNC can provide information on what working groups may be near the area you've identified.

reflect your geography, i.e. Upper Midwest Working Group.

Solicit support

First speak with other physicians and technicians in your anticipated region and get their opinions on forming a working group. Make sure and talk with individuals from other institutions in your market area as well as outside your market area, but within your anticipated working group region. The last thing you want to do is put forth a great deal of work and find little support for what you have done.

I cannot emphasize enough the need to make your working group devoid of local politics. I would encourage you to make your own working group stationary and never use your professional stationary or introduce yourself as a member of a specific clinic or hospital. You are a member of ASNC who supports the promotion of nuclear cardiology through education, and that is all that need be said.

Establishing a bank account

Do this early and be prepared for bureaucracy. Now that you have established a name, in the United States the name has to be registered with the state in order to obtain a tax ID number. It is possible to establish a bank account without a separate tax ID number, but this requires your personal tax ID number (social security number). I would advise against this since the account will be forever attached to your name and be your financial responsibility/liability. Obviously, a separate account allows flexibility in shuffling the

treasurer's responsibilities to other members and it allows the working group to continue if you were to leave the region etc.

The Secretary of State can provide you with the appropriate form to register your name. Once you receive this registration, you can then apply to the US Department of Revenue for a tax ID number. With a registered name and tax ID number, you can now proceed to the bank with all of your appropriate forms and apply for a checking account. Thus you can see why it is important to start on this one early. Once you have an account number, it allows you to have ASNC and industry sponsorship funds made out directly to this account and utilize its tax ID number, rather than your own.

Obtaining funding

ASNC is a big help in launching your first meeting. The organization provides \$2,000 in funding for your first year. However, this requires submission of an application found in this workbook; review and acceptance of your application; and finally, mailing out the check. As a result, you may be somewhere down the road toward your first meeting before you receive the ASNC funding. Therefore, expect to personally cover the first bills until funding arrives.

While the application for establishing a working group is certainly not rigorous, it is helpful to have a name picked out, a checking account established, and a speaker selected prior to submitting your application. This certainly helps to lend credibility and commitment to establishing a viable working

group. The application also requires a rough draft of a budget, so talking with your selected meeting site is helpful if you plan to provide refreshments and/or food. Thus you can see why obtaining funding may be the last thing you receive—hopefully just before your first meeting!!

Your industry representatives will most likely become your main source of funding as time goes on. Of course, having a successful first meeting makes it all the easier to obtain continued support. I suggest you call your industry representatives and ask for their support early in their fiscal year and also send out a letter to all representatives announcing the formation of a working group and asking for their support. Specifically request unrestricted grants, rather than have them directly support meetings of the working group with speakers of their choosing. After your group is established, I would simply send a yearly letter again requesting support for all the meetings of the group for the entire year. This saves you work and also guarantees that you get the most money before their budgets run low.

Obtaining a speaker

First, select your topic. This is harder than it seems because you want it to be of interest to technologists, doctors, industry representatives and nurses—all of those who participate in nuclear cardiology. I suggest you begin with a rather general topic on nuclear cardiology and its utility, unless there happens to be a very specific hot topic, which you know will draw a crowd. Second, I would ask a well-known person in

your region or nationally to be your speaker.

If it is a person in your region, make sure that having that person speak would not align the new working group solely with his or her organization and alienate other potential participants. Finally, provide a per diem and expenses consistent with the going rate in the region. If funding is a problem, industry representatives can many times sponsor the speaker, but just make sure the selected speaker is of your choosing and not theirs. Providing an honorarium is also standard.

Getting the word out

The ASNC office and membership roster is a good place to start for a mailing list. They can send you the list printed on labels or electronically. Eventually you may want to create your own database once you identify the truly interested individuals, but initially cast a wide net. Don't forget to also gather the local Society of Nuclear Medicine (SNM) and/or American College of Cardiology (ACC) membership lists. Industry representatives are generally well known in the area and nurses simply have to be identified and added to the mailing list. Enroll your industry representatives early to get the word out. They frequently tour the area practices and hospitals and can directly hand out fliers. Finally, use your local distributors of radiopharmaceuticals to put brochures in the radionuclide cans used for distributing radioisotopes.

Especially for your first meeting, I would suggest mailing out a letter along with the flier announcing the first meeting (see

example attached). The letter is helpful to explain why a working group is being formed.

Make sure not to use personal or professional stationary, but keep it non-political. I used a scanner and produced our own letterhead. The flier can also be used as the reply form by including a small section at the bottom where the interested person can fill-out some basic demographics and fax back a reply (see example attached). This reply can then be answered by a return fax confirming receipt of the information.

Typing the letters/fliers, copying, pasting addresses, returning faxes and collating the information all takes time, so be prepared—enlist help!!

Selecting a site and caterer

In your region, the city location may be obvious for all meetings. But in others, you may choose to rotate the city in order to better represent the entire region. The specific location may depend on your anticipated attendance or on what you plan to serve for food. While it may be cheapest to use one of your employer's conference rooms, this may alienate some attendees who come from other organizations. We chose to go with a local hotel, which is readily accessible with adequate catering. We have also used this location for all subsequent meetings, which make the arrangements simple, and everyone remembers where to go!

With regard to room size, the difficult part is guessing your first attendance. Of course, food is an important part of any conference—

especially when you are trying to encourage attendance. Unfortunately, this too is difficult to anticipate because you might not yet have adequate funding to provide a dinner. However, a free dinner is a great enticement. This again points out the need to secure funding very early. Many of our attendees come straight from work and the dinner is a welcome part of the meeting. After our first meeting, we added a cash bar and opened the meeting area a little earlier to allow people to gather before sitting down to dinner. It has turned into a real social event for attendees who frequently don't see their colleagues at other institutions.

Reception table

At the entrance to the meeting room, a reception table is important in order to get attendees to sign in. This will help you manage your data for future meetings. In addition, we provide attendees with name tags. Finally, this is a good spot to provide brochures for CME credits, ASNC membership applications, copies of the *ASNC Newsletter*, and brochures on upcoming ASNC events.

Organizing the Program

A basic rule for any successful meeting is to start on time and end on time. Therefore, we begin serving dinner at 7pm and start the program promptly at 7:30pm, even though the food service isn't quite complete. We begin each meeting with brief business issues and announcements followed by a few case presentations with the images projected on a large screen from a computer. At our first meeting, I also had made up some slides about what nuclear cardiology working group

was about and its mission. I kept the message short and simple. I then provided all attendees with a survey asking for their input on many organizational issues for future meetings such as time, day, location, food and topics. I found this very helpful in clarifying our working group intentions and allowing input from those who will become its members.

Next, the featured speaker talks for about 45 minutes leaving a few minutes for questions.

The goal is to have everyone dismissed by 8:30pm. Running late hurts future attendance because some attendees may have to travel a long distance to reach their home. As a result, they will be less likely to attend if they know they are likely to get home late.

Organizing the leadership

Electing officers and rotating duties for an organization is rather typical, however elections take time and energy and learning new duties does too. Therefore, I decided to take a representative group of five individuals who had expressed an interest. Those individuals made up our executive council. These members were from different health organizations in our region and included three cardiologists, a radiologist, a nurse, and a technician.

We decided to have two executive council meetings a year to discuss new issues and potential topics. After we identified the duties that needed to get done for each meeting, we divided them up. So far we have stuck with the same duties for every

meeting so we don't have to learn new tasks.

Once a topic, speaker, and date is picked, the rest essentially falls into place like clockwork.

For further information or to discuss questions or concerns, the following individuals and groups have offered to speak with those interested in establishing new nuclear cardiology working groups:

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Upper Midwest Nuclear Cardiology Working Group
Minneapolis Cardiology Assc.
920 E. 28th Street
Suite 300
Minneapolis, MN 55407
Phone: (763)577-7615
Fax: (763)577-7610
E-mail: hurrell@allina.com

April Mann, CNMT
Southern New England Nuclear Cardiology Working Group
Hartford Hospital
Dept. of Nuclear Cardiology
80 Seymour St./P.O.Box 5037
Hartford, CT 06102-5037
Phone: (860)545-5531
Fax: (860)545-5631
E-mail: amann@harthosp.org

Marko Yakovlevitch, MD
Pacific Northwest Nuclear Cardiology Working Group
Northwest Hospital
1560 N. 115th St.
Suite 204-A
Seattle, WA 98133-8414
Phone: (206)363-1004
Fax: (206)363-3548
E-mail: Marko.Yakovlevitch@nwhsea.org

Working Groups Coordinator
American Society of Nuclear Cardiology
9111 Old Georgetown Road
Bethesda MD 20814-1699
Phone: (301)493-2360
Fax: (301)493-2376
E-mail: edgerton@asnc.org

SAMPLE INVITATION LETTER

April 1998

Dear Colleagues,

Nuclear cardiology is an exciting field of medicine which provides a great diagnostic tool for the assessment of patients with known or suspected cardiac disease. In 1993 The American Society of Nuclear Cardiology (ASNC) was formed. As one of its many goals, it has promoted research and education in nuclear cardiology. In 1995 ASNC approved and agreed to support the formation of regional and international working groups of ASNC in order to enhance education and communication among those involved in nuclear cardiology in any given geographic area. To date over 40 working groups are in existence around the world and have successfully integrated physicians and technologists with a common interest. However, no such working group yet exists in the upper midwest including the five state area of MN, WI, IA, SD and ND.

We would like to invite you to participate in the founding meeting of the Upper Midwest Nuclear Cardiology Working Group. We hope, by bringing together cardiologists, radiologists, nuclear medicine physicians and technologists in this region, that we can all come together for education on a common theme. This organization is to be void of politics and facility affiliations. We hope that individuals from both the academic and private sector will choose to attend. This should be an exciting forum to get together with colleagues and friends to share ideas, learn from each other, and perhaps even initiate research. We plan to meet two times per year, so the commitment is not overly time consuming. While it is encouraged that you consider joining ASNC, it is not a requirement to participate in this or any meeting of the working group.

The first meeting will be held Monday, May 18th, at the Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport Hilton Hotel just off the 34th avenue south exit on interstate highway 494. There is no charge for the meeting and dinner will be served. Our first invited guest is Dr. Robert C. Hendel, M.D., co-director of nuclear cardiology at Northwestern University Medical School in Chicago. Dr. Hendel was founder of the Great Lakes Working Group and will be speaking on his experience in a working group, and he will also be presenting an educational lecture entitled, "Myocardial Perfusion Imaging: New Developments and Applications." Dr. Hendel is an excellent speaker and it is guaranteed to be an enjoyable evening.

We encourage you to fill-out and fax back the enclosed registration form as soon as possible. Please feel free to also invite any of your associates who may not have received an invitation. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

David G. Hurrell, M.D.
Cardiologist
Member, ASNC

Geoffrey R. Bodeau, M.D.
Radiologist
Member, ASNC

SAMPLE CONFIRMATION LETTER

Confirmation of Attendance

To: _____

*Upper Midwest Nuclear Cardiology
Working Group*

Monday, May 18th, at the Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport Hilton, Ballroom D
(Take the 34th avenue south exit off I-494; located just south of the interstate)

6:30 pm Dinner (no charge)

7:15 Introductory remarks and organization

7:30 Guest speaker:

“Myocardial Perfusion Imaging: New Developments and Applications”

Dr. Robert C. Hendel, M.D.

Co-director Nuclear Cardiology

Northwestern University

Founder of the Great Lakes Working Group

Thanks for your reply. The response has been terrific and we are already expecting attendance from a number of different cities and towns in the various states of our working group. Technologists, physicians and industry are all planning to attend. Please encourage your colleagues to join us.

Please note: We are obligated to the cost of your dinner, so please notify me even up to the last minute if you cannot make it. If you need more information, please contact me (David Hurrell) by fax at (612) 863-3784 or by voice mail (612) 863-7310. If your colleagues plan to attend, but they have not received a confirmation, please let me know.

Announcing the Founding Meeting:

Upper Midwest Nuclear Cardiology Working Group

Physicians and technologists involved in the practice of nuclear cardiology are invited to attend this first meeting. You need not be a member of ASNC.

Monday, May 18th, at the Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport Hilton, Ballroom D
(Take the 34th avenue south exit off I-494; located just south of the interstate)

6:30 pm Dinner (no charge)
7:15 Introductory remarks and organization
7:30 Guest speaker:

“Myocardial Perfusion Imaging: New Developments and Applications”

Dr. Robert C. Hendel, M.D.
Co-director Nuclear Cardiology
Northwestern University
Founder of the Great Lakes Working Group

Please fax this completed form to David Hurrell at (612) 863-3784 by May 8th and you will receive a confirmation by fax.

Name: _____ Institution: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____ Fax: _____ E-Mail: _____

Position (circle one): Physician Technologist Other

SAMPLE FUNING REQUEST

(courtesy Northern New England Working Group)

Northern New England Nuclear Cardiology Working Group

Division of Cardiology 22 Bramhall Street
Maine Medical Center Portland, ME 04102-3175
(207) 871-2413 FAX (207) 871-6038
mccohen@maine-rr.com

Date

Dear ____:

We are writing on behalf of **the Northern New England Nuclear Cardiology Working Group** to request your support for our educational activities for the remainder of 2000 and 2001. In the past year we have organized several regional meetings and have hosted well known speakers including Dr. Rory Hachamovitch (Cornell University), Dr. James Udelson (New England Medical Center), Dr. John Mahmarian (Baylor Medical Center), Dr. Jennifer Mieres (Northshore Medical Center, Manhasset) and Dr. Frans Wackers (Yale University School of Medicine).

These highly educational evenings include dinner, a presentation from a guest lecturer and presentation of interesting cases. We continue to encourage participants to bring interesting or difficult cases for review and discussion. This forum has provided an important local educational program for physicians interested in nuclear cardiology. The programs are well attended by cardiologists, internists, radiologists, nuclear medicine physicians, physicians in training and nuclear technologists. Continuing education credits for physicians and technologists are available. The audience generally includes 40-60 people.

Meetings have been held in the Greater Portland area as well as Waterville, Nashua, NH and Peabody, Massachusetts. Frequently, people travel over 100 miles from around New England to participate. This is the only such nuclear cardiology meeting in Northern New England.

These meetings are very important but require support from companies like your own. We will not be able to continue to run these events and maintain the high quality that we all seek without adequate financial resources. Therefore, we would appreciate your support for the remainder of 2000 and 2001. Please send funds to the Cardiology Division, Maine Medical Center. The check should be made out to the Nuclear Cardiology Research and Education Fund, in care of Mylan C. Cohen, M.D., M.P.H. The Maine Medical Center tax identification number is 01-02-38552.

Thank you in advance for supporting this important educational activity. We look forward to continued collaboration in the future.

Sincerely,

Mylan C. Cohen, M.D., M.P.H.

Jeffrey A. Rosenblatt, M.D.

Linda L. Converse, RTN

Deborah A. Hunter, CNMT

Suggested sponsorship levels:	Platinum Sponsor:	Over \$2,500
	Gold Sponsor:	\$1,500-\$2,499
	Silver Sponsor:	\$1,000-\$1,499
	Bronze Sponsor:	\$500-\$999

ASNC Support and Opportunities

The ASNC Office has a number of ways to support nuclear working groups and their local events:

- **Mailing Labels.** Lists of ASNC members mailing addresses can be provided to assist directors in growing the local working group membership list and to provide mailing labels to promote educational events. The list will include members from the geographical area the working group wishes to encompass and the director may specify which regions or states to include along with the member types desired (physician, technologist, associated personnel, etc.). This is provided for a modest fee to cover administrative support, but is not intended as a revenue generating enterprise for ASNC.

- **A list of nuclear cardiology working group directors.** Local directors are encouraged to use this list to contact other directors and colleagues for advice or support or for speaker recommendations. To maximize attendance and resources, local working groups often work collaboratively as well to offer joint meetings or seminars.

- **Listing of events on ASNC Interactive Education Calendar** (<http://www.asnc.org/calendar/calendar.cfm>). The Education Calendar on the ASNC website was created to announce educational opportunities in the field of nuclear cardiology. Working Group Directors are encouraged to post their meeting information using the online form. These meetings will appear on the Calendar in dark red. (ASNC activities are listed in blue.) Each meeting post is reviewed by ASNC before being activated on the Calendar.

- **Opportunities to display meeting fliers and other pertinent local working group information at any ASNC exhibit.** ASNC exhibits include the ACC (March), the SNM (June), the ASNC Annual Symposium and Scientific Session (September), the AHA (November) and ICNC (biennially, in April). Working group directors may bring display materials directly to the booth, or may send the materials to the ASNC office in advance. If sending in advance, the materials must be received in the ASNC office no fewer than three weeks before the exhibit dates to assure that the materials will be included in the ASNC shipment. Working group directors should call the ASNC office for information on exact dates.

- **Copies of ASNC *Newsletters*, membership applications, position papers, educational opportunities and other pertinent ASNC material made available for display at local working group meetings and events.** This is both an opportunity for the local working group to promote greater interest in nuclear cardiology and to enable local practitioners access to state-of-the-art guidelines and position statements and be informed of nuclear cardiology symposia or courses and other training opportunities or grants. Directors or their staff may contact the ASNC office at least three weeks before the working group event is to take place to designate preferred reprints or other material, as well as to give approximate numbers needed. If a request is made fewer than three prior to an event and the local group wishes to have the material send by overnight delivery, the group must cover the cost of this service and the material will be sent C.O.D.

- **Start-up Funding for Nuclear Cardiology Working Groups**

The ASNC office, through grants from its industry partners, is able to make available start-up awards in the amount of \$2,000 for local working groups. The objective is to assist the group with a small amount of funding to carry out the beginning groundwork of establishing itself.

To apply for funding, working group directors must submit a completed application to the ASNC office (see Page 14). **All information must be completely filled out and a list of members or potential members of the working group must be appended.** In some instances of initial development, the director may use the list of ASNC members (described above) as its base. In this situation, the director should note it on the application. Once the application is received in the ASNC office, it will be reviewed to assure that it meets the objectives. The process usually takes approximately one week from receipt in the ASNC office.

By accepting start-up funding the director, on behalf of the local working group, agrees to the following obligations:

- To hold a local event within six months of receipt of the grant. If this does not happen, the group must return the funds. The group may, however, make application again at a later date.
- To provide ASNC with a brief report of the first meeting, including when it was held, where it took place, the approximate attendance, speaker(s) and topic(s).

- To acknowledge ASNC's grant with the following statement during the meeting and on promotional material:
"Establishment of the XXX Working Group was funded in part by an unrestricted educational grant from the American Society of Nuclear Cardiology"

A **Reporting Form** is included with the Start-up Funding Grant.

Some things to consider in the beginning

In establishing your new working group, you may want to poll your audience/probable members to determine:

- Who they are and what they do: (Physicians, Techs, others; Cardiology, Nuclear Medicine, Radiology; Academic, Hospital Based, etc.)
- What are the goals of the group: (educational, advocacy; social, etc.)
- What should be the format: (cases, technical, clinical, inside/outside speaker, etc.)
- How often to meet (most groups meet between 2-5 times annually)
- Where to meet (some meet in the same location, some meet at various locations within a given region)
- Mechanisms for funding; Charges for attendance at meeting
- How to Govern (offices, elections, terms, etc.)

Each group is independent and responsible for running its own affairs and for the setup of its educational and governance systems. Optimally, changes leadership in leadership will take place periodically and via an established and deliberate process. Additionally, many groups have adopted an official statement of

cooperation, support and non-competitive fundraising between themselves to continue to assure the optimal delivery of nuclear cardiology services.

Educational Credit

Many nuclear cardiology working groups provide Continuing Medical Education (CME) credit from the local institution for physicians who participate in events. We also urge local groups to make VOICE credit available for technologists who participate in local activities. VOICE credit is sponsored by the Society of Nuclear Medicine and all forms and application instructions are available on the SNM website (www.snm.org). In addition, groups are encouraged to actively involve technologists, residents and fellows in the development of events and as part of the program. Nuclear Cardiology is comprised of complimentary functions. The field and the patients we serve benefit when physicians, technologists and industry work together as a team.

Application for Nuclear Cardiology Working Group Start-up Funding

Working Group Contact Name & Address:

Telephone:

FAX:

E-Mail Address:

Geographic Area of the Working Group:

Organizers/Officers:

Plans for initial meeting (date, location, speaker(s), topic(s), funding, promotion, etc. - append additional pages as needed):

Plans for subsequent activities, if known (dates, locations, etc.)

How do you plan to use this grant (append budget if applicable)?

What are your plans for additional and continued funding after initial ASNC grant allocation:

Provide information on bank account and name of payee ASNC should use to issue check for grant:

Append a mailing list of possible working group members. Total number = _____
(Include physicians, scientists, technologists, industry representatives, etc.)

I agree that by receiving grant funding from ASNC my working group will hold its first function within six months and that I must submit a Reporting Form within one month of the activity. If no event takes place within six months, I will return the funds. I will be eligible for application of a grant at a future date.

Signature

Date

Nuclear Cardiology Working Group Grant Reporting Form

To be sent to the ASNC Office within one month of the initial meeting

Working Group Name: _____

Contact Person: _____

Phone No. / FAX No.: _____/_____

Email Address: _____

Date ASNC Grant Received: _____

Date of First Meeting: _____

Location of Meeting: _____

Speaker(s): _____

Topic(s): _____

Total Attendance _____

Physicians _____ Technologists _____ Other _____

CME Credits Offered _____

VOICE Credits Offered _____

Date and Location of Next Scheduled Meeting:

Please Send Report to:

Working Groups Coordinator

American Society of Nuclear Cardiology

9111 Old Georgetown Road

Bethesda, MD 20814-1699 USA

Tel: 301/ 493-2360 FAX: 301/ 493-2376

admin@asnc.org