

ADVOCACY UPDATE

ASNC Urges Insurers to Reflect COVID-19 Safety Recommendations in Coverage

In a [letter](#) sent on April 28 to each of the major insurers, ASNC urged the companies' medical directors to enact coverage guidelines consistent with ["Guidance and Best Practices for Nuclear Cardiology Laboratories during the Coronavirus 2019 \(COVID-19\) Pandemic: An Information Statement from ASNC and SNMMI."](#) This effort follows reports from members that insurers have contradicted the ASNC/SNMMI recommendations for COVID-19 response. In particular, the letter to insurers points out that ASNC and SNMMI have advised the following precautions to reduce the spread of SARS-CoV-2:

- **Not using exercise stress testing**, with or without vasodilator stress, given the increased risk of exposure of respiratory droplets;
- **Pharmacological stress with vasodilators is preferred**, as it minimizes droplet exposure to staff and enables further distance between patient and staff; and
- **Use of PET where available**, given the rapid throughput and limited time in the lab it enables.

In addition to contacting the insurers directly, ASNC developed a [template letter](#) that providers may submit to payers to appeal decisions denying coverage for procedures that are in line with the statement's recommendations aimed at keeping patients and personnel safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

[READ THE LETTER TO INSURERS](#)

MILESTONE MOMENT

First ImageGuide Registry Publication Delivers Insights on Appropriateness, Utilization, and More

The vast majority of the myocardial perfusion imaging cases submitted to the ImageGuide Registry® from 2015 through 2018 were **appropriate** (96%), of **good or excellent quality** (89%), and employed **rest/stress 1-day protocol** (88%). These were among a variety of findings published last week in the *Journal of Nuclear Cardiology*.

The publication delivers a real-world look at the landscape of nuclear cardiology in the U.S. today while also demonstrating the value of the ImageGuide Registry to help "answer important clinical questions," says **Peter L. Tilkemeier, MD, MMM, MASNC**, study coauthor and chair of the joint ASE/ASNC Registry Oversight Committee.

The observational study focused on the 10,000 patient records submitted to the registry in its startup period, during which the steering committee intentionally limited participation to smaller practices so as to avoid overwhelming the data pool with the cases of large and hospital-based practices. The goal, the authors wrote, was to ensure that the early data were "representative of the greater community." ASNC's [blog](#) and a [JNC/ASNC podcast](#) with lead author **Joshua B. Elder, MD**, highlight more key findings from the study.

This small study is a huge first step for ImageGuide's goal of providing the field with real-world data that will uncover opportunities for growth and improvement. Rami Doukky, MD, MSc, FASNC, chair of the ASNC Registry Oversight Committee, offers a glimpse at ImageGuide's next leap forward: "The next frontier," he says, "is creating a Tc-99m PYP imaging registry for patients with suspected cardiac amyloidosis."

[READ THE JNC ARTICLE](#)

COVID-19 NEWS & RESOURCES

New Temporary CMS Rule Allows Audio-only Telehealth Visits for E/M CPT Codes 99441-99443. On Thursday, April 30, 2020, CMS released a new rule expanding telehealth services to allow for audio-only technology. Previously, a real-time video and audio platform was required to be paid for telehealth services. Effective March 1, 2020, payment for audio-only telehealth services is equivalent to the Medicare payment for office/outpatient visits with patients. Both new and established patients can receive audio-only telehealth services; payment parity for those services will extend to both patient categories. CMS also is allowing behavioral health and education services to be furnished using audio-only technology if all required elements in the applicable telephone E/M codes 99441-99443 are met. [Access details.](#)

IAEA Posts 'COVID-19 Pandemic: Guidance for Nuclear Medicine Departments.' The IAEA's Town Hall webinar, which featured **ASNC President Sharmila Dorbala, MD, MPH, FASNC**, and other panelists from around the world, is now available for on-demand viewing. [Watch now.](#)

[COVID-19 RESOURCE CENTER](#)

ASNC UPDATES

- **'Restarting Your Nuclear Lab' Webinar Slides Now Available.** Hundreds of health imaging professionals from around the globe came together on last week's webinar for guidance on an issue that's on everyone's mind: how to safely and efficiently restart nuclear medicine operations as the COVID-19 pandemic begins receding. ASNC is preparing the recorded webinar for on-demand access. In the meantime, the complete slide deck is available. ASNC thanks Cardinal Health for supporting this activity. [Download the slides.](#)
- **ASNC Developing Guidance for Reestablishing Nonemergent Care in Nuclear Cardiology Labs.** In collaboration with partner groups, ASNC will issue an information statement outlining when to restart nuclear imaging operations, recommendations for use of testing and PPE, and specific principles for nuclear cardiology imaging. **Watch for the publication.**
- **ASNC2020 Abstract Submission Deadline Extended.** In response to member feedback, the ASNC2020 Program Committee will accept abstracts for original scientific research **through June 12.** All accepted abstract presenters will have the opportunity to **present live or virtually** as an uploaded abstract (with or without audio). [Learn more & submit your science.](#)
- **Earn CME and MOC with Nuclear Cardiology Knowledge Self-Assessment Program (NCKSAP).** Eight modules, each with 30 multiple-choice questions, answers, rationales, and references - exactly what you need to prepare for certification, recertification, or practice improvement. [Download the module\(s\) from ASNC's Learning Center.](#)

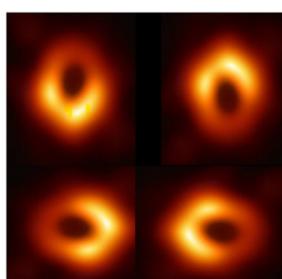
[ASNC's LATEST NEWS](#)

What Is This Image?

Enter your interpretation of this image for a chance to win an **ASNC Gift Pack** and **complimentary ASNC2021 registration**. Here's how to play:

1. Review the image [here](#).
2. Go to the [submission portal](#).
3. Enter your interpretation by May 20.

It's that easy!



[PLAY 'WHAT IS THIS IMAGE?'](#)

COMING SOON!

ASNC Virtual CV Molecular Imaging Seminars

The American Society of Nuclear Cardiology is poised to launch an international platform where current and future leaders in cardiovascular molecular imaging will network without leaving their own labs.

This video-conference-based forum will be an open forum for --

- Molecular imaging **research education**;
- **Networking** and career advancement;
- Fostering **inter-laboratory collaborations**; and
- Introducing **new opportunities** for investigators.

Stay tuned for the seminar schedule, topics, faculty, and details about how you can participate!

HOW HAS COVID-19 AFFECTED YOU?

Take the COVID-19 Impact Survey to give ASNC more insights into how we can work for you and deliver on our mission "to improve cardiovascular outcomes through image-guided patient management."

[TAKE THE SURVEY](#)

Thank You for Everything You Do.

Share this email:



Manage your preferences | [Opt out](#) using TrueRemove™

Got this as a forward? [Sign up](#) to receive our future emails.

View this email [online](#).

9302 Lee Highway Suite 1210
Fairfax, VA | 22031 US

This email was sent to .
To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.