

Radiopharmacy and growth of nuclear medicine in developing countries

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Clinical Nuclear medicine applications are growing very fast in the world. The great impact of nuclear medicine in the management of major health problems is becoming evident and visible. Many hospitals in developing countries, public and private, are interested more than before by installing a department of nuclear medicine. The approach in developing countries for supporting the expansion of nuclear medicine should be adapted to the new context taking in consideration the development of radiopharmacy and the availability of new radiopharmaceuticals. Classically radiopharmacy in developing was limited to "hot lab" where basic preparations of technetium 99m radiolabelled cold kits are done sometimes in hot cells when available. Today those infrastructures are no longer appropriate and do not fit with the increase of clinical needs expressed daily in hospitals. This situation requires to educate train and recruit a radiopharmacist. The main responsibility of the Radiopharmacist or "Radiopharmaceutical Scientist" in nuclear medicine is the preparation of radiopharmaceuticals to ensure their safety and efficacy. They are also responsible for the quality of the product which is essential to the increase of the impact on patient management through a correct interpretation of the results of the investigation, or the delivery of the correct therapeutic dose. There is considerable scope for research and development in the field of radiopharmaceutical science. Also the infrastructure should be adapted to the new requirements with appropriate drawing, air circulation, staff education and traceability of gross products and radiopharmaceuticals including clinical aspects.

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