Engaging with the community to promote professional medical physics

Quan Chen, Ph.D., DABR
Associate Professor, Radiation Medicine
University of Kentucky
Lexington, KY, USA
ENGGAGING WITH THE COMMUNITY TO PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL PHYSICS

Objectives

1). To review the community outreach that AAPM is promoting and why it is needed

2). To solicit engagement of ORVC-AAPM members in their local communities and describe the AAPM resources available to them
PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMITTEE (PEC)

• Responsible to present and promote to the public the role and practice of medical physicists as part of a patient’s healthcare team, as applied clinical researchers, and as teachers and professionals in the medical device industry.

• Public education and understanding of the medical physicist’s role is essential to building public support and recognition for the medical physics profession.
WHY EDUCATE THE PUBLIC PART OF ROLES OF MEDICAL PHYSICISTS?

• Essentially all individuals in the Western world will be exposed to medical radiation in their lifetime; womb to final care. The roles and practice of medical physicists therefore has relevance to the whole population of the USA and to their healthcare experience.

• Interfacing with the public as an educator is an important role that carries lots of benefits.
  - Raise general awareness of our discipline as champions of quality and safety
  - Reduce fears of radiation exposure for patients and their families, help them make the right choice
  - Stimulate interest of students to STEM, provide career choice

• Political support for legislation and protection in times of economic downturn and healthcare budget cuts

• Most of all it is FUN to take pride our profession and let everyone know about the important job we do!
WHAT AAPM HAS DONE TO CONNECT WITH PUBLIC

Public Position Statements, Comments on Issues of Public Interest, Press Releases

http://www.aapm.org/org/positionstatements.asp

- CT dose
- Airport scanner dose
- Response to NYT articles
- ...
WHAT IS AAPM DOING TO INTERFACE WITH THE PUBLIC AND STUDENTS?

- Developing a new public education website
  - Medical diagnostic imaging
  - Scientific Innovations
  - Medical radiation therapy
  - "Ask the Expert" (with AIP)
  - Medical radiation risks and safety
  - Frequently asked questions
  - Medical physics careers
  - Speakers bureau
  - History of medical physics
  - Patient information
  - Public news and events
  - About us
  - Information for teachers and students
  - Information for first responders
WHAT IS AAPM DOING TO INTERFACE WITH THE PUBLIC AND STUDENTS?

Outreach

- MedPhys Wiz Kids
- SUFP and DREAM
- International Medical Physics Day events
- Volunteer speaker directory
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF MEDICAL PHYSICS

- Better Medical Physics
- Medical Physics: Providing a Holistic Approach to Women Patients and Women Staff Safety in Radiation Medicine
- 150th Birthday of Marie Skłodowska Curie
- International Day of Medical Physics

- International Organization for Medical Physics
- Looking into the Body - Advancement in Imaging through Medical Physics
WHAT CAN YOU AND YOUR CHAPTER DO TO ENGAGE THE PUBLIC?

Participate and Volunteer

- Enroll as a volunteer speaker
- Educate locally at schools and community organizations
- Educate the emergency first responders (police/fire/ambulance)
- Organize annual public events for international medphys day
- Raise awareness of the role of medical physicist at your institution
- Elect a student for MedPhys Slam
- Recruit other volunteers
- Think and do!

Contact me: qchen@uky.edu