

Nuclear medicine report shows patterns in use at Hospitals vs non-Hospitals

Good numbers on the use of nuclear medical procedures.

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An estimated 19.7 million nuclear medicine procedures were performed during 17.2 million patient visits in the United States in 2005, in over 7,200 hospital and non-hospital sites, according to a report just released by IMV Medical Information Division. This represents a 15% increase from 2002 to 2005, from 14.9 million to 17.2 million patient visits, for an average annualized rate of 5% per year over the period. Over half, or 57%, of the patient visits were for cardiovascular studies, including cardiac perfusion.

"Nuclear medicine utilization (not including PET procedures) has been driven by cardiovascular applications, which have grown from 35% of 1992 procedures to 57% in 2005," observed Lorna Young, Senior Director, Market Research, IMV Medical Information Division. "Non-hospitals, such as cardiology practices, have focused on cardiovascular procedures, where 80% of their nuclear medicine patient studies are cardiovascular. While both the hospitals and non-hospitals are equally likely to perform cardiovascular procedures, hospital sites are more likely to perform tumor localizations, radionuclide therapy, bone scans, and liver, respiratory and renal studies."

The report describes trends in nuclear medicine patient visits by procedure type, radiopharmaceutical and pharmacological stress agent utilization, camera and computer installed base by manufacturer and year of installation, planned purchases, networking, and site operations characteristics. The report also covers adoption trends of new technologies including SPECT/CT. Highlights include:

- The average number of nuclear imaging cameras installed per site is 1.8 units.
- Two-thirds of the cameras installed in non-hospital locations occurred in 2000 or later, compared to 45% of those installed in hospital sites.
- Replacement activity is active, with over two-thirds of purchase activity at these nuclear medicine sites being for replacement units.
- Nuclear medicine sites are expanding their network capability to transmit images for both cardiology and radiology applications, such as images from cath labs, CT, MRI, echocardiography and general ultrasound.

The 2005 edition of the Nuclear Medicine Census Database profiles 5,500 sites, which comprise over 75% of the 7,200 identified nuclear medicine facilities in the United States, including over 3,000 non-hospital locations. The database can be licensed by qualified subscribers and includes contact and site-specific information. IMV's 2005 Nuclear Medicine Market Summary Report is available with the database license, or as a separate purchase.

IMV Medical Information Division, Inc. is a market research consulting firm founded in 1977 specializing in medical imaging and other advanced healthcare technology markets. IMV's proprietary market research services, in combination with census databases of U.S. imaging sites with selected modalities, provide clients with valuable assistance in strategic planning, customer satisfaction, market development and sales initiatives.