Dear Nuclear Medicine patient

My name is Adrian Hardy and I represent patients on the British Nuclear Medicine Society Council and on their Professional Standards Committee as what we call a ‘lay representative’.

I have been asked to help Nuclear Medicine departments across the country get feedback from patients on their services. Your feedback will be used to help the Nuclear Medicine teams understand more about their patients’ experiences and look at ways to further improve and support their patients.

I’ve also been asked to develop some patient-related material which could be put on an educational BNMS YouTube channel. The purpose of the material is to help prepare people who have been referred to Nuclear Medicine and hopefully allay any concerns they may have about having some form of ‘nuclear’ medicine scans or treatment.

I have set out some potential areas of interest below, many others may appear relevant to you with your own experience – I have never had any form of nuclear medicine scans or treatment myself so I may well miss out some areas of concern.

Any information that is shared will be anonymous. Clearly if there are areas you don’t want to discuss, e.g., the finer points of your own condition, that is fully understood as we want to protect patient confidentiality.

If you are willing, we could also arrange to have a video call at your convenience so that you can talk about your experience and the points you have raised. I know other patients would find this useful and reassuring. However, I completely understand if you would prefer not to do this. Just answering the questions below will be a big help to other people.

Questions:

1. What aspects of Nuclear medicine have you come across during your illness?
   a. Diagnosis – what form did it take?
   b. Treatment – what form did it take?
   c. Follow-up investigations – have you had any, and if you have what form and how frequently have you had them?

2. Did you have any particular concerns when ‘nuclear medicine’ was mentioned to you?
   a. If so, what were they and how did you set about resolving them?
   b. Did your clinician, consultant, or doctor explain what would happen and why?
   c. When you were invited for the treatment did the Nuclear Medicine staff explain what would happen? Was this detail with the appointment letter, or when you arrived on the day?
   d. Did you do some research yourself, e.g., internet searches, asking people who had been to Nuclear Medicine how it had affected them?
3. If nuclear medicine was only one of several options for diagnosis or treatment of your condition, were the various alternatives explained to you?
   a. If so by whom and did they lead you in a particular direction?
   b. Did you feel your views were being taken into account and adequately answered?

4. How did you find the various experiences?
   a. Was the process more drawn out than you had expected?
   b. How long were you waiting post administration of the isotopes before you could have scan? I understand it is a slower process than a simple MRI scan.

5. Did you experience any pain or unexpected side-effects from the administration of the isotopes?

6. If you have had nuclear medicine treatment following your diagnosis does the treatment so far appear to have been successful?
   a. Have there been fewer or more side-effects arising from it than you were led to expect?
   b. Can you tell me about these side effects please?

7. Is there any advice that you would give to a patient who had some reservations about having this type of treatment or diagnosis?
   a. Looking back is there anything you could have been told about beforehand that you would have found beneficial?

Thank you for considering these questions. Please send me your feedback by either:

E-mail: My email is apaulhardy@aol.com.
Phone: Send me a text on 07707 901953 and I will get back to you to take your feedback over the phone.