

THE AMERICAN BOARD OF NEUROLOGICAL SURGERY

Member Board of The American Board of Medical Specialties



PROGRAM DIRECTORS LETTER May 2006 ABNS Directors Meeting

DIRECTORS

ROBERT A. SOLOMON, M.D.
New York, New York
Chairman

RICHARD B. MORAWETZ, M.D.
Birmingham, Alabama
Vice-Chairman

M. SEAN GRADY, M.D.
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Secretary

MARC R. MAYBERG, M.D.
Seattle, Washington
Treasurer

DANIEL L. BARROW, M.D.
Atlanta, Georgia

H. HUNT BATTJER, M.D.
Chicago, Illinois

CHARLES L. BRANCH, JR., M.D.
Winston-Salem, North Carolina

KIM J. BURCHIEL, M.D.
Portland, Oregon

WILLIAM T. COULDWELL, M.D.
Salt Lake City, Utah

ROBERT L. MARTUZA, M.D.
Boston, Massachusetts

PAUL C. McCORMICK, M.D.
New York, New York

TAE SUNG PARK, M.D.
St. Louis, Missouri

WARREN R. SELMAN, M.D.
Cleveland, Ohio

CRAIG A. VAN DER VEER, M.D.
Charlotte, North Carolina

Administrator

MARY LOUISE SANDERSON

Dear Program Director:

NeuroLog, the ABNS web-based, operative database program, transitioned from its original host DataHarbor to Outcome Sciences in the fall. All legacy data was transferred, as well. Users now see a new home page and modified forms, which were developed through the efforts of Drs. Charles L. Branch, Jr., Kim J. Burchiel, M. Sean Grady, and Paul C. McCormick, ABNS Directors. Further modifications are being instituted based on user feedback provided to the ABNS and the Outcome helpline. These include:

1. A search filter for Resident B and Fellows,
2. New reports exactly matching the format of the Residency Review Committee for Neurological Surgery,
3. Resident Coordinators able to configure log-ins for residents,
4. Updated user manuals, and
5. Users able to view only their own data,

These changes will take place over the next three months. Also in development is a new platform that is .xml compatible and has other features users will appreciate. For instance, it will enable users to download data from Excel spreadsheets. The launch date is planned for the spring of 2007; no significant transition issues are anticipated. Users will receive more information at that time.

Following are the current members of the **Residency Review Committee**.

American Board of Neurological Surgery

Dr. Ralph G. Dacey, Jr.

Dr. Dennis D. Spencer, Vice-Chairman

Dr. M. Sean Grady, Ex Officio

American College of Surgeons

Dr. Steven L. Giannotta, Chairman

Dr. Volker K. H. Sonntag

PROGRAM DIRECTORS LETTER
May 2006 ABNS Directors Meeting

American Medical Association Council on Medical Education

Dr. Robert A. Ratcheson

Dr. Arthur L. Day, observer

Resident Representative

Dr. Vishal C. Gala, M.D.

ACGME Staff

Larry D. Sulton, PhD, Executive Director

Ms. Susan Mansker, Accreditation Administrator

In February Dr. Sulton notified all Program Directors to confirm the changes in **PGY-1 training** approved by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education in 2005 and implemented as of July 1, 2006. Since control of that year has been moved to neurosurgery Program Directors, the ABNS voted to allow interns enrolled in accredited neurosurgery programs to take the Primary Examination. The change will go into effect for the 2008 Examination. The ACGME continues to use surveys of residents wherein they indicate their satisfaction with the educational efforts at their institutions, as well as compliance with **duty hours**. A significant number of neurosurgery programs have the eight-hour duty exception. This has become the subject of a good deal of concern at the ACGME, and their surveillance will be continued. The present European Working Time Directive specifies that no more than 48 hours of duty per week may be conducted. The European Union of Medical Specialists is highly concerned about the effect this is having on surgical specialty training and has requested an increase of twelve hours per week. Resolution of the matter remains open.

There has been an increase in the number of available residency positions filled through the **Neurosurgery Match**. From 2002 to 2006 the number of positions matched has gone from 135 to 165. This is due to increases in resident complements and newly approved programs, both brought about through the efforts of the RRC. About 90% of US senior medical students match into residency programs, suggesting that the pool of qualified applicants remains closely related to the number of available positions. The performance of successful resident applicants seems to be stable on Part 1 of the USMLE.

In March 2006, a total of 525 examinees took the **Primary Examination** at 97 test centers. Two hundred twelve took it for credit toward certification. It had 375 questions, of which 356 were scored, leaving a broad, even distribution of questions across the seven categories. The passing score was 284, and the mean percent correct was 72%. The reference group, which

PROGRAM DIRECTORS LETTER
May 2006 ABNS Directors Meeting

consists of all individuals taking the Examination for credit for the first time and within two years of completing residency, had a 1% failure rate (1 of 81 residents) and 76% correct answers. The non-reference group had approximately 70% correct. Over the past ten years, the examination has continued to maintain its degree of difficulty.

Average Scores for Residents Taking the Examination for Credit

Level of Training	Number of Residents	Average Score
PGY1	-0-	-0-
NS1	7	333
NS2	42	376
NS3	67	476
NS4	61	492
NS5	13	445
NS6+	2	562
	Overall Average	453

Average Scores for Residents Taking the Examination for Self-Assessment

Level of Training	Number of Residents	Average Score
PGY1	-0-	-0-
NS1	114	209
NS2	112	304
NS3	57	343
NS4	18	357
NS5	3	380
NS6+	2	300
	Overall Average	284

Programs of Residents with the Highest Scores

Cornell University/New York Presbyterian Hospital
George Washington University
Indiana University School of Medicine
Mayo School of Graduate Medical Education

