



® **American Board of Neurological Surgery Statement Regarding Dr. Christopher Duntsch**

The story of Dr. Duntsch is a tragedy involving, among other things, serious institutional failures at hospitals that allowed him to continue to operate even after so many horrible outcomes and behavioral red flags. But the fact that some institutions failed in their patient safety mission does not mean that all institutions within neurosurgery were similarly complicit.

In fact, Dr. Duntsch never started the ABNS certification process after completing residency. The entire purpose of ABNS certification is identify and “Certify” only those neurosurgeons who have demonstrated both in their regular practice (through submission and peer ABNS review of their practice data which includes patient selection, surgical technique, and outcomes) and in the context of a thorough in person oral exam, that they have knowledge, skills, and professional attributes to provide safe and competent neurosurgical care. We respectfully suggest that if Dr. Duntsch had applied for ABNS certification, he would have failed given his practice history, personality traits and probable knowledge deficits. Perhaps this is why he never applied for ABNS credentialing.

Indeed, one of the best things a patient can do with respect to seeking the best and safest neurosurgical care is to ensure that he or she is being treated by a neurosurgeon certified by the American Board of Neurological Surgery. While no certification or similar process is 100% perfect, we believe that the ABNS does an excellent job identifying those neurosurgeons who are competent, knowledgeable and most importantly safe.