

Minutes for Spine Section Executive Committee Meeting
April 11, 2011
Denver, Colorado

Members Present: Praveen Mummaneni, Daniel Lu, Sanjay Dhall, Ziya Gokaslan, Joseph Cheng, Mike Kaiser, Bob Heary, Jean Coumans, Zo Ghogawala, Dan Sciubba, John Hurlbert, Eric Potts, Marjorie Wang, David Okonkwo, Charles Sansur, Kojo Hamilton, Robert Spinner, John Chi, Michael Rosner, Daniel Resnick, Charles Kuntz, Michael Groff, Reg Haid, Langston Holly, Frank LaMarka, Kurt Eichholz, Chris Wolfla

Guests: Nicholas Barbaro, Katie Orrico

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Wolfla at 1105 am.

1. Secretary's report

P. Mummaneni

- a. Update of email list and contact info- Attendance sheet was collected.
- b. A review and approval of minutes from prior EC meeting in March was completed.
- c. Dr. Mummaneni reviewed the latest EC grid with attendees.

2. Treasurer's Report

J. Hurlburt

- a. Review and approve budget
Ron Engelbriet stated the portfolio currently has \$2.4 million in investments and did have a positive increase in returns in the past year. The losses from 2008 and 2009 in the stock portfolio have been recovered by 2011.
- b. Review Expense Vouchers
- c. Review Annual meeting reconciliation – postponed until the fall EC meeting.
- d. Review Reimbursement Policy – the guests are allowed business class airfare if they are from overseas. The domestic guests are allotted economy class airfare. The guest speakers can receive up to \$1,000 of honorarium and their hotel stay is paid for by the Section.

3. New business

1. "Matrix" project (SNS)

Nick Barbaro

Details are highlighted below.

2. OREF Termination of Spine study groups

Chris Shaffrey

Dr. Shaffrey was not present, and the update is postponed.

3. Wrong level surgery survey

Mike Groff

Dr. Groff asked the EC members to fill out the survey on wrong level surgery.

Dr. Gokaslan pointed out that this is a major credentialing issue. Discussion was held to send the survey results to the JNS along with an editorial by Dr. Paul McCormick and a clinical case-cohort paper on this topic by Dr. Mummaneni. Dr. Wolfla and Dr. Gokaslan proposed a position statement on this topic from the AANS/CNS Spine Section.

4. Dr. Cheng proposed that a resident's course for peripheral nerves be organized.

Dr. Mummaneni proposed that it be "piggybacked" to the AANS resident's course to avoid some structural costs of cadavers and room rent, etc. Dr. Sciubba will try to help coordinate this with Dr. Spinner and Dr. Belzberg from the Peripheral Nerves Taskforce.

5. N2QOD – Neuropoint Alliance update Matt McGirt

Dr. McGirt stated that 27 centers have committed to participate in the N2QOD project. AANS legal is trying to finalize the HIPAA paperwork associated with this project. An “ownership” document for the data is also being created. The initial project will focus on common lumbar spine procedures. Each site will need to pay \$12,000 subscription fee per site and a partial FTE paid for by each site. This data will be self-reported. The data will be validated.

6. Clinical benefits of surgical nav response Charley Sansur

Dr. Sansur updated the group on his proposal to obtain reimbursement for spinal navigation. No response to Dr. Sansur’s proposal has yet been obtained.

7. BCBSNC bundling policy response Pete Angevine/Joe Cheng

An initial draft was created to unbundle decompression from PLIF codes. Dr. Cheng is hoping for a response to be obtained from BCBSNC within a few weeks.

8. Preliminary DSPN Registration Summary Chris Wolfla

The residents who attended the 2011 meeting decreased and the overall medical attendees decreased from last year. The residents had the written boards overlapping with the meeting in 2011 and that limited attendance.

4. Old business

March 2011 – committee report – the outcomes awards winners will be updating Dr. Ghogawala and sending in their papers for publications.

5. Committee Reports

a. Annual Meeting

M. Wang

Guest is Mark Davies from Australia – Medtronic Australia will pay for his airfare and expenses. The FOSSA may be the co-meeting group. The guest country is planned to be Brazil.

b. CPT

J. Knightly

For the next year the laminectomy and TLIF/PLIF codes may be bundled. It is important to fill out the surveys for procedures with accurate data representing true, difficult cases to support the case values.

c. Exhibits

M. Wang

- Recommendations derived from vendor meetings. Consideration questions include: should the exhibit hall be shut down on Saturday? This should be discussed by the Annual meeting Chair with the CNS staff.
- Some vendors paid over \$500 for the room per night. Dr. Wolfla says they may not have registered for the meeting and did not book their rooms from meeting services.

d. Future sites

I. Kalfas/E. Woodard

Next year’s meeting will be at the Swan and Dolphin Resort. The next four meeting locations are to alternate between the Swan and Dolphin Resort and the Desert Ridge JW Marriott are already committed. From 2015 onwards new sites will need to be considered.

e. Research and Awards

A. Kanter

Full report to follow in the Fall.

f. Education

F. Lamarca

The CNS subject matter has been finalized.

g. Guidelines

M. Kaiser

- There are four guideline projects: Cervical, thoracolumbar trauma, metastatic spine, and lumbar fusion update guidelines.
- There is a request for more funds for this project as only \$25,000 is budgeted. Dr. Kaiser requests the budget be doubled for this year for a total of \$50,000 and be kept at \$50,000 for the following years. Dr. Wolfla made a motion to fund this at \$50,000 per year. Dr. Mummaneni seconded the motion and the EC approved this unanimously.
- The joint guidelines committee is asking for two spine members. Dr. Wolfla will discuss this with Dr. Ryken. Volunteers include: John Chi, Kojo Hamilton, Sanjay Dhall, Kurt Eichholz.
- The section coordinator at the AANS is Casey McGrath.

h. Outcomes

Z. Ghogawala

- Update clinical trials awards presentation
 - The prior award winners have given progress reports.
 - Khalid Abed reported that for the MIS TLIF cases – 24 out of 100 patients have been enrolled.
 - Marjorie Wang updated Diffusion Tensor imaging trial at the Spine Section.
 - Bobby Agrawal has updated that comparative effectiveness for a statewide lumbar fusion registry in Wisconsin is underway.
 - For the past few years, the budget was \$75,000 from the Spine Section and \$75,000 came from the Wallace Foundation.
 - Dr. Ghogawala asked for one more year of award at \$50,000 and to obtain matching funds from the Wallace Foundation.
 - Dr. Resnick stated that NREF wants to fund outcomes awards in the future.
 - Dr. Groff proposed that we limit the clinical trials award to 1 from the Spine Section per year. Dr. Wolfla seconded this motion. A unanimous vote approved this measure.
 - The motion was amended by Dr. Resnick to increase this funding to \$75,000. This motion was seconded and carried.
- NeuroPoint SD investigating lumbar disc surgery and single level lumbar fusion surgery. There are 92 patients enrolled. The compliance rate is 97% at this time from ten centers.
- NeuroPoint SD #2 is being planned.

i. Peripheral nerve TF

R. Spinner

Dr. Spinner is rotating off as the task force leader. Dr. Belzberg will be replacing him. He stated that the Peripheral Nerves task force was unhappy with their timeslots and wanted more slots. Dr. Mummaneni pointed out that prior attempts to invite peripheral nerve faculty were rejected if they were not invited for Saturday morning only.

- j. Publications L. Holly/ J. Dhall
Solications were sent out for the platform speakers for JNS Spine. The outcomes award winners are being invited to the JNS as well. NS Focus published the abstracts.
Dr. Gokaslan asked where the guidelines should be published. Dr. Oyesiku reportedly discussed with Dr. Jane that the cervical spine guidelines should be published in both the red and the white journals.
Dr. Resnick proposed a subcommittee to discuss these issues and return to the EC with a proposal. Dr. Wolfla asked Dr. Holly to help organize a proposal.
- k. Public Relations M. Steinmetz
Full report to follow in the fall.
- l. Membership P. Angevine
Dr. Angevine will report this in the fall
- m. Washington Committee R. Heary/ K Orrico
Dr. Heary pointed out that Washington committee issues are increasingly relevant to the Spine Section. Katie Orrico said the Washington Cmte budget is \$1.4 million dollars. Dr. Wolfla moved to give \$100,000 to the Washington Cmte for the next year, and these monies should be used to increase funding for the Cmte rather than replacing funds from the AANS and the CNS. Dr. Resnick and Dr. Wolfla asked Dr. Heary to explore the options for funding. Dr. Knightly asked for someone from the Spine Section to represent Quality issues for the spine, and he proposed John Ratliff. Dr. Knightly also asked that John Ratliff become the QIW person for the Spine Section. Dr. Wolfla seconded this motion and this was unanimously approved.
- n. Fellowships M. Wang/ L. Holly
No formal report. To follow in the fall.
- o. Web Site E. Potts
 - i. Dr. Potts will streamline the web site for free access to the residents.
 - ii. Dr. Potts linked the red journal videos to the Spine Section website.
 - iii. Dr. Gokaslan asked that the NREF application be linked from the Spine Section Fellowships and Awards page. Dr. Ghogawala is to help Dr. Potts to do this.
- p. CME C. Sansur
 - i. 2011 planning guide is completed. The patient outcomes portion (Section 7C) will be deleted.
- q. Nominating Committee Z Gokaslan
 - i. Full report to follow in the fall
- r. Rules and Regs J. Smith
 - i. Full report to follow in the fall
- s. Newsletter K. Eichholz
 - i. NREF issues will be publicized.
- t. ASTIM J. Coumans
 - i. Dr. Coumans will update us in the fall on nonarticulating versus articulating arthroplasties.
- u. NREF Z. Gokoslan/E. Woodard
 - i. Working still with OREF to formalize a plan

- v. AANS PDP K. Foley/ P. Johnson
 - i. No new info
- w. Young Neurosurgeons comm. D. Sciubba/J. Bellotte
 - i. No new info
- x. FDA drugs and devices J. Alexander
 - i. No new info
- y. AMA Impairment G. Trost
 - i. No new info
- z. Inter-Society Liaison M. Rosner/Dr. Barbaro

Dr. Rosner stated that milestones for residents need to be met. The SNS is organizing these milestones.

Dr. Barbaro presented “Core Competencies” for the residents endorsed by the SNS, and the ABNS and the RRC. A Matrix curriculum has been organized. Milestones in spinal training should be created. The SNS curriculum subcommittee needs to work with Spine Section to do this. ACGME is asking all specialties to develop milestones for the residents. Dr. Gokoslan asked if the CNS template is being used by the SNS, and Dr. Barbaro said it was being considered. Frank LaMarca, Mike Rosner, and Jim Harrop volunteered to help with this.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 2 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Praveen Mummaneni, Secretary.