

Minutes for Spine Section Executive Committee Meeting
March 07, 2012
Orlando, FL

Members Present: P. Mummaneni, J Hurlbert, C. Kuntz, J. Smith, P. Angevine, P Anderson, G. Trost, K. Fu, C. Sansor, J. Knightly, A. Belzberg, JP Johnson, D. Resnick, M. Groff, D. Sciubba, Z. Gokaslan, J. Alexander, K. Orrico, D. Okonkuro, K. Foley, R. Heary, L. Holly, J. Cheng, L.M. Tumialan, D. Lu, M. Rosner, I. Kalfas, R. Haid, P. Jacob, M. Wang, D. Fournery, E. Potts, Z. Ghogawala, K. Hamilton, D. Hoh, M. Wang, C. Wolfla

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Wolfla at 08:00

1. Secretary's report P. Mummaneni

- a. Update of email list and contact info
- b. Review and approval of minutes – minutes approved by Dr. Wolfla and Dr. Hurlbert.
- c. Review EC grid
- d. Informational items
 - Section Support of NREF (*)
 - Chris Wolfla told the EC that NREF may be evolving and may request the Spine Section's endowment to be a part of this newly reorganized foundation.
 - STASCIS (*)
 - Mike Fehlings and wanted to disseminate information regarding STASCIS to the EC. Paul Anderson told the group that early surgery for Frankel B and C may have better results than late surgery.
 - SPC report- Marjorie Wang (*)
 - Jack Knightly will take this over for next meeting. First new SPC meeting is this Friday. Ireland will be the guest country for next year.

2. Treasurer's Report J. Hurlbert

- a. Review and approve budget (*)
 - Total expenses for the annual meeting have tended to increase over time and the revenue is decreasing. The revenue peak was 2009 and the revenues have been decreasing since then. As of December 31, 2011, our endowment is \$2.3 million in a long term investment pool. The fellowships have been funded as promised by all companies who have committed to this process through the work of Mike Wang and Adam Kanter and the exhibits cmte.
- b. Review Annual meeting reconciliation

3. New Business

Chris Wolfla brought up a project from Deb Benzil on "The Global Cost of Spine Care for Patients." Greg Trost told the EC this is an effort for the CSNS to increase their participation through a liason with the AANS/CNS Sections. Jack

Knightly has told the group that this may help to assess QALY. Jack Knightly, Greg Trost, Joe Cheng, Dan Sciubba will spearhead this effort.

CNS neurowiki is looking for spine contributors – Charley Sansur volunteered to help.

Endowment funding and strategic planning will be handled at the Past Chair's meeting on Friday.

Dr. Shaffrey asked the EC:

Should there be a "recognition of focused practice for spine surgery" by the ABNS? This issue will be discussed by the Section EC at our next meeting at the AANS.

4. Old Business

5. Committee Reports

a. Annual Meeting

D. Fournay / Marjorie Wang

There has been an increase in medical attendees but a decrease in exhibitor registration. Spine Section members registered to date are 231 (195 last year). All medical attendees registered to date are 416 (435 last year). Revenue targets will likely be met this year.

b. CPT

J. Cheng, J Knightly

- Joe Cheng said the main issue is the bundling of lumbar posterolateral fusion with interbody fusion (22633 and 22634 are the new CPT codes). Bundling will occur when codes are used together more than 70% of the time. Joe Cheng will give the slides from his presentation to Eric Potts to post on our Spine Section website. Joe Cheng will be assisted in the CPT and Rapid Response effort by Pat Jacob (who will be the next leader for this group).
- Rapid Response team was formed a year ago and has been very successful. Joe Cheng is leading this effort. It was created to ensure patient access to specialized spine skills. The leaders are Joe Cheng, Luis Tumialan, Charley Sansur, Peter Angevine, Kojo Hamilton, John Ratliff, Dan Ho, etc.

c. Exhibits

Mike Wang/ Dan Hoh

Exhibitors will be closing up on Friday pm rather than Saturday am to save their costs. Exhibitor retention rate is 2/3 year over year. Need 25 new companies next year to achieve growth. This is due to 1. Mergers of the exhibitors 2. Medical device tax 3. Increased competition from other meetings 4. Medical device companies are not as profitable as in the past.

Bob Heary reported that CSRS has obtained a commitment from companies of \$9 million (\$900,00 per year for a ten year commitment). Some companies backed out of this over time. Ziya Gokaslan asked if NREF is a funding mechanism for Spine Section. Reg Haid said this needs to be explored with Chris Shaffrey and NREF. Praveen

Mummaneni suggested that the Section follow the SRS model to have no exhibits booths. Have a flat grant and then do hands on workshops with key faculty. Mike Wang said this year's total input funding from exhibits is \$723,000, but only half comes from the exhibits hall. Chris Wolfla suggested having just have 4 very expensive booths and then do "hands on" efforts. That will decrease costs of the exhibits hall for the Spine Section and for the exhibitors. Mike Wang suggested that NASS has been successful with new startup companies as it is a "known" meeting location for these companies and is marketed as such. Dan Resnick suggested having more orthopedic surgeons come to Spine Section to increase attendance and increase vendor interest. Paul Anderson suggested that revenues will trend down over the next 5 years. It is better to alter the model now and wean off of the exhibit booth model. Joe Cheng, Mike Wang, Charlie Kuntz, Chris Wolfla, Reg Haid, and Chris Shaffrey will come up with a long term plan and vet it by the CNS meeting. Joe Alexander suggested getting CNS meeting planners involved with this issue as well. Dan Hoh was proposed as a co-chair by Mike Wang and this will be cleared with Joe Cheng. Pat Johnson suggested looking to philanthropic organizations that support our educational mission.

- d. Future sites I. Kalfas, E. Woodard
 - Next year's meeting will be held in Phoenix. The future meeting sites will need to take into account the need for exhibits space. Other options to replace Orlando include Miami, Tampa, New Orleans, Atlanta. Charlie Kuntz suggested that the meeting should be in a resort and to keep the airport easily accessible.
- e. Research and Awards A. Kanter
 - Regis Haid Spinal Deformity Award update – Globus is supporting this award at \$30k per year for three years. Justin Smith/UVA won this year's award.
 - We need to advertise the awards that are available as some of the awards are not receiving many applications (Kline award initially had no applicants). Dr. Belzberg suggests we get residency program directors involved with the applications.
 - Dr. Wolfla has forwarded the NREF spine fellowship award applications to the cmte.
- f. Education Frank LaMarca
 - No major changes from last meeting
- g. Guidelines M. Kaiser
 - A meeting will be held this Friday during the break from the program to discuss the recommendations and dates of the included articles per Dr. Mummaneni (Dr. Kaiser was not present).
- h. Outcomes Z. Ghogawala
 - Dr. Ghogawala and Dr. Hoh updated the cmte.

- Neuropoint SD – lumbar discectomy and single level fusion was studied. 199 patients were enrolled. Follow up compliance is 94 per cent. Effectiveness of lumbar discectomy and fusion shows excellent results with ODI.
 - Dr. Hoh discussed the Clinical Trials Awards. Past winners are Drs. Abbed, Wang, and Agrawal. This year there were 5 proposals that were blinded and reviewed by the cmte. Three of them were finalists: Drs. Brad Jacobs, Jeffrey Wilson, and Sanjay Dhall. There is a \$50,000 one year funding award from this cmte, and the winner is not yet decided. ½ of this amount will be given up front and the remainder will be given after half the patients are enrolled and a talk is given at the Spine Section. The goal is to have all of these awards sent to NREF for funding.
- i. Peripheral nerve TF A. Belzberg
- Discussed coding issues and grant submissions
 - American Society of Peripheral Nerve Surgery is currently being led by neurosurgeons (Raj Midha and Allan Belzberg).
 - The AANS peripheral nerve resident's course was offered for the first time and is fully subscribed
 - Coding issues are being discussed with Joe Cheng. Changes are needed to update the codes to current practice
 - The Kline award will be advertised by Dr. Belzberg to his peripheral nerve colleagues in the task force.
- j. Publications L. Holly
- There is discussion whether to utilize Neurosurgery and JNS to be the platform for the Spine Section's oral abstracts. This issue will not be decided until the AANS selects the future editor-in-chief. Once that has been finalized, the two main journals' editors will be invited to the Spine Section EC to make proposals. Expedited review is offered to our oral platform presenters if they submit this year's talk/paper to JNS.
- k. Public Relations M. Steinmetz
- Cervical spine injury guidelines article is being prepared. Dr. Wolfla asked public relations to reach out to orthopedic surgeons to become adjunct members of the Spine Section.
 - A new blog for neurosurgery was created as well as a Twitter handle to increase options for advocacy. An advocacy effort regarding the value of spine is under way.
- l. Membership P. Angevine
- Orthopedic members are less than 10 in spite of inviting SRS, CSRS, AO Spine as invited organizations. Orthopedic surgeons are adjunct members. Dan Resnick and Charlie Kuntz have asked Justin Smith to look at the Bylaws to change the name of the "adjunct" members to be more inclusive. Jack Knightly and Paul

Anderson are discussing orthopedic organizations to be invited next year to be part of our annual meeting (AOA, etc.).

m. Washington Committee

R. Heary (K. Orrico)

- Katie Orrico reported a 10 month extension of current Medicare payments. Unless Congress acts, there will be a 32% cut by end of the year.
- The IPAB which is appointed by the President to cut Medicare spending is allowed to cut payments to doctors and device companies (but not hospitals). It is unclear what will happen with the IPAB (pending the election results).
- Zo Ghogawala updated the N2QOD effort. The first module is the lumbar spine module. There are 19 sites that are engaged. Katie Orrico discussed need for IRB approval efforts for this Quality improvement project.
- Jack Knightly discussed QIW issues. HCAPS/SCAPS (patient centered outcomes) may become a major issue for reimbursement. These measures are related to communication with patients.
- Dan Resnick reported on a recent publication that shows patient outcomes are inversely correlated to Press-Ganey scores.
- Bob Heary brought up the topic of neuromonitoring and the need for its use in certain high risk cases versus for all routine cases. Bob Heary and Dan Resnick will communicate about how to get the AANS-CNS Guidelines recommendations circulated to show the evidence-based results of this topic. A position paper will be created by Dan Resnick and Bob Heary. Then Chris Wolfla/Joe Cheng will sign it and send to CSNS.

n. Fellowships

G. Trost/Mike Wang

- No fellowship match was held in 2011. The proposal was for a match to be held in the fall for any fellowships not secured 9 months ahead of the start of the fellowship. NASS does the orthopedic match through the SFNS.
- NREF funding of spine fellowships is not covering the costs for the programs. A letter will be sent on this topic to Reg Haid to bring up with NREF.

o. Web Site

E. Potts

- Dr. Potts has updated the videos offered on the website. Videos from Neurosurgery and JNS are also housed on the website.

p. CME

C. Sansur

- CNS education cmte is represented by Dr. Sansur. Case based learning through spine modules is being developed. This will be a method of obtaining CME. CME course attendance for NP/PA have been dropping for unclear reasons. Charley Sansur will discuss this issue with Andrea Strayer who runs the NP/PA course to ensure we are offering the requirements for licensure renewal for NP's and PA's.

- Dr. Mummaneni suggested MOC CME programs at the AANS/CNS Spine Section next year to satisfy ABNS requirements.
 1. SANS 100 spine questions can be used by orthopedic surgeons and neurosurgeons for MOC requirements. Shall we have a practical course to cover this material for our members?
 2. Dr. Knightly and Dr. Sansur will explore this issue and report back.
 - Dr. Gokaslan suggested CME for pain and end of life care to satisfy licensing requirements. Dr. Mummaneni and Dr. Knightly suggested working with CSNS to find out what are the states requiring CME for trauma, end of life care, and pain treatment. Charley Sansur and Jack Knightly will look into this issue.
- q. Nominating Committee C. Shaffrey
- Incoming Chair – Joe Cheng then Mike Groff
 - Annual Meeting Chair – Marjorie Wang
 - SPC – Jack Knightly
 - Secretary – Praveen Mummaneni
 - Treasurer – Charlie Kuntz
 - Past Chair – Chris Wolfla
- r. Rules and Regs J. Smith
- Addition of RRC (Rapid Response Committee)
- s. Newsletter M. Steinmetz, K. Eichholz
- Congress Quarterly had a Spine Section update
- t. ASTM J. Coumans
- This voluntary organization sets the standards for medical devices and spinal devices. It is composed of governmental regulators and industry members and engineers. FDA considers their input.
 - Some issues that come up include metal on metal wear debris and disc prostheses.
 - It is a once a year meeting.
- u. NREF Z. Gokaslan, E. Woodard, R. Haid
- Quality of the grant submissions this year has improved. The final meeting to select the winners is upcoming.
 - The fellowship support letters for spine fellowships were sent out last week.
 - Dr. Wolfla reminded the committee that funding for the Spine Clinical Investigator Award was increased with the intention of increasing the award amounts.
 - The amount for fellowship funding does not satisfy institutional cost. Dr. Mummaneni will send a note to Dr. Haid to bring up increased funding for fellowships with NREF.

- Dr. Charlie Branch updated the NREF/OREF collaboration for the funds donated by industry. There is now a collaborative spine research foundation in place. Dr. Branch now says there is an equitable platform in place with NREF and OREF. OREF is a much larger and better funded organization. NREF has an \$8 million endowment and OREF has an \$80 million endowment. CRFR is the collaborative foundation of NREF and OREF.
- Dr. Haid asked the EC to donate to NREF individually.
- v. AANS PDP K. Foley, P. Johnson
 - No new info
- w. Young Neurosurgeons comm. C. Upadhyaya
 - No new info
- x. FDA drugs and devices J. Alexander
 - Update attached (*)
 - The Sunshine Act will start reporting payments in 2013. It is unclear if spine organizations and their CME efforts will be included in the reporting. 510k system may be altered. Off label use of implants may or may not be allowed in the future. These issues are in flux at this point per Joe Alexander and Katie Orrico.
- y. Inter-Society Liaison M. Rosner
 - No new info
- z. Spinal Deformity training P. Mummaneni
 - Dr. Shaffrey states that dissemination of spinal deformity training principles needs to be done. This information is currently not on the oral and written boards. Dr. Branch suggests to submit questions on spinal deformity for the boards.
 - Spinal deformity curriculum was submitted by Mike Rosner to the Senior Society to incorporate this information into residency training
 - Dr. Wolfla suggests that SANS questions should be written for spinal deformity.
 - Dr. Wolfla suggests a link from our website to the SRS online textbook on the SRS website.
 - Dr Haid suggests a CME course on spinal deformity – tasked with making this happen by Dr. Wolfla including: Drs. Rosner, Sansur, Mummaneni, Potts, Shaffrey.
 - Dr. Mummaneni asked Dr. Wolfla and Dr. Cheng to write to the ABNS to request that spinal deformity issues be tested on the written and oral boards.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at Noon.

Respectfully submitted, Praveen Mummaneni, Secretary.