



MEMORANDUM

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To: Neurology Residency Program Directors, Fellowship Directors, and  
AAN Section Chairs

From: Stanley Fahn, MD, AAN President

cc: Terrence Cascino, MD; Aaron Miller, MD; Patricia K. Coyle, MD;  
Catherine M. Rydell; Christine E. Phelps; Susan K. Rodmyre; Mari E. Mellick;  
Mike Amery

Date: March 18, 2003

Subject: J-1 Visa Regulations Update

The American Academy of Neurology (AAN) reviewed the proposed J-1 Visa regulations via its Legislative Affairs Committee, Graduate Education Subcommittee of the Education Committee and the Board of Directors. In addition, the AAN Board of Directors has been working with the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology (ABPN) to establish a policy for physicians in non-standardized fellowship programs. The ABPN sent the enclosed letter to the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) listing the non-standardized subspecialties of neurology that are eligible for allowing J-1 Visa holders into these subspecialty areas.

The ECFMG has agreed to allow the following pathway for ECFMG J-1 sponsorship: Programs within a subspecialty “recognized” by an appropriate Board of the American Board of Medical Specialties as evidenced by a letter from the CEO of that Board. The ECFMG outlines the requirements that must be met for this type of ECFMG J-1 sponsorship. These requirements include documentation from the applicant’s home country and verification that the proposed training program is directly associated with a neurology program that is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). The complete list of requirements can be found on the ECFMG web site at [www.ecfm.org/evsp/evspnews.html#subspec](http://www.ecfm.org/evsp/evspnews.html#subspec). Then click on “Summary of Discussions on J-1 Sponsorship Issues. The information is contained in a file that requires Acrobat Reader on your computer to open it.

We understand that these steps take time and hope these latest developments assist your subspecialty programs. If you have any questions on the J-1 Visa status, please feel free to contact Mari E. Mellick, AAN Medical Education Manager, at 651-695-2719 or [mmellick@aan.com](mailto:mmellick@aan.com).

Enc: ABPN letter to the ECFMG

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A Member Board of the American Board  
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March 13, 2003

James A. Halleck, M.D.

President and Chief Executive Officer

Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates

3624 Market Street

Philadelphia, PA 19104-2685

Dear Dr. Halleck:

In follow-up to your coming to the American Board of Medical Specialties Committee of Board Representatives and Executives' February meeting, the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology (ABPN) is providing this statement to the Educational Committee for Foreign Medical Graduates regarding fellowships in neurology for determination of eligibility for J1 Visas.

The following list includes disciplines of subspecialization in neurology:

AIDS

Alzheimer's Disease

Dementia

Geriatric Neurology

Behavioral Neurology

Epilepsy

Headache

Interventional Neurology

Movement Disorders

Neuroimmunology to include Multiple Sclerosis

Neuroepidemiology

Neurogenetics

Neuroimaging

Neurologic Critical Care

Neuromuscular Disorders

Neuro-Oncology

Neuro-Ophthalmology

Neuro-Otology

Neuropathology

Neuropharmacology

Neurorehabilitation

Neurovirology and other infections of the Nervous System

Sleep Disorders

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These disciplines require one to two years of additional training (fellowship) following the completion of a residency in neurology. None of these subspecialty disciplines has fellowships accredited by the Accreditation Council of Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), and the ABPN does not issue certificates to individuals upon completion of subspecialty training in these disciplines.

Although the ABPN has no direct knowledge of the individual programs, it hereby acknowledges the importance of the subspecialty discipline within neurology; however, the ABPN cannot comment on the validity of an individual program in the absence of accreditation by the ACGME.

Sincerely,

Stephen C. Scheiber, M.D.  
Executive Vice President

SCS/pj