



GUIDELINES FOR THE ORGANIZATION AND CONDUCT OF DISCUSSION GROUPS

Considerable research has demonstrated that a single exposure to an educational product is rarely successful in producing beneficial change in one's clinical practice. The more reinforcement of the educational message, the more successful the effort. The WFN CME printed courses are designed to enhance learning by using such techniques as problem based instruction and interactive techniques. Studies have shown that this approach is indeed effective in changing clinical behaviors. However, in order to further enhance the effectiveness of these courses, as well as provide other educational opportunities, the WFN CME program incorporates a discussion group format.

These discussion groups are primarily organized to enhance the effectiveness of the printed courses but also provide an opportunity to exchange additional information that would enhance better patient care. Several guidelines should be useful in enhancing the effectiveness of these discussion groups. While we would like you to broadly follow these, we acknowledge that you may need to adapt them to your local situation.

1. The discussion group should be scheduled about six weeks after each of the two shipments are received. *Do not forget to notify us of the arrival of the printed material.* A group of 10-12 participants usually works best. Try to make sure that all have read the courses before the meeting.
2. The group should meet at a convenient location (home or hospital) and at a convenient time. It should last about 2-2 ½ hours. The atmosphere should be as relaxed as possible with coffee, tea etc. In general, there should be one meeting for each mailing of courses i.e. two meetings a year. However, some have found that additional meetings are useful, holding a separate meeting for each title, for example.
3. It is important to be careful in choosing the discussion group leader (facilitator). This might be the Education Coordinator or a person who has special knowledge in the subject to be discussed. However, above all it should be someone experienced in leading group discussions and one who has the skills to keep the discussion flowing smoothly, allowing all to participate. An autocratic leader suppresses open discussion as does someone who tends to dominate information exchange.
4. The discussion should be interactive and particularly based on the cases on the courses. Remember that the Continuum courses are written mainly from the perspective of neurologists practicing in the U.S. Thus, a particular challenge will be to discuss case management recommendations from the perspective of the practice of those in the discussion group.
5. The evaluation forms, which should be filled out *at the meeting itself*, are most important for the WFN to make meaningful changes based on participants' comments, to justify to the AAN their generous donation, and to present to prospective funders as evidence of the program's success. The Educational Coordinator should email these forms to Wendy Holloway (wfnadmin@concorde-uk.com), or by fax to (+44 20 87431010). Certificates will be awarded once yearly to participants who return evaluation forms completed with comments, and who are members of the national neurological society.
6. We are both available for any questions or comments.

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