

RESIDENT AND FELLOW NEWS

The Official Newsletter of the Consortium of Neurology Residents and Fellows

**CONSORTIUM OF
NEUROLOGY RESIDENTS AND
FELLOWS (CNRF)
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

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Chair's Corner Benjamin Atkinson, MD

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all of our new Junior members to the AAN and the Consortium of Neurology Residents and Fellows (CNRF). As a Junior member you automatically become a member of the CNRF. The executive branch of the CNRF is peer-elected by the voting members of the CNRF during the AAN Annual Meeting, and is comprised of a Chair, Chair-Elect and Past-Chair. An elected person serves for one year in each of these positions. As our mission statement states, we are committed to advocacy for resident/fellow education, increasing participation in the AAN at all levels, and developing methods of networking for residents and fellows. We receive tremendous support from all levels of AAN including the President to amazing staff personnel at the Academy and without their help nothing would get done.

As a Junior member of the Academy, you will receive multiple publications including *Neurology*, *Neurology Today*, *Continuum*, and *Neurology Now*. These range from peer reviewed journals to publications for patients. The AAN Website www.aan.com contains almost all of the resources that the AAN has to offer and is a great resource when trying to find something related to neurology. Finally the AAN Annual Meeting and regional meetings provide educational opportunities, career networking, and exposure to leading edge research. As Junior members, we qualify for a discounted rate on a majority of courses and scholarships to the meeting.

The CNRF is in place to be your advocate. To perform this task better, we are currently beta testing a web forum so that all Junior members can communicate and network with each other. We will then have a much easier time communicating with each other and having everyone involved. The CNRF webpage at www.aan.com/go/education/residents on the AAN website is being redesigned to be more user-friendly. We have advocated for members by having extensive talks with the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology (ABPN) concerning price, content, and format of the new Certification Exam in Neurology. Our talks have led to the development of a payment plan for the exam, which currently is \$3,000. Finally, we have made a concerted effort to find interested and qualified residents and fellows who would like to participate in committees and subcommittees of the AAN.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to interacting with you in the future. I hope that you find the articles about the "New Certification Exam in Neurology," "Resident Specific Educational Course Offered at the AAN Annual Meeting," and "Podcast AAN" articles helpful and informative.

The New Certification in Neurology Exam By Benjamin Atkinson, MD

This is the first year of the new format for the Certification in Neurology Exam which is offered by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology (ABPN). This is the exam that we take as neurologists to prove to the public that we have attained the required knowledge to competently practice neurology. For many years the exam was taken in two parts; the written exam which consisted of multiple choice questions, and then an oral exam. A candidate could take the oral exam only after passing the written exam. The ABPN has now moved to the single format written exam. The clinical and oral components are now tested in the new computerized exam and by five clinical evaluations completed at your place of training.

The current cost of the exam is \$3,000. It is administered during a single day at PearsonVue testing centers. This limits the total amount of travel needed for each candidate because a test site is located within 50 miles of most candidates. The overall cost of the exam is now cheaper than in the past when you account for the old written exam cost, oral exam cost, and travel and lodging costs. It has been explained that it costs a substantial amount of money to create this new computerized test which includes video segments. The oral exam will still be in effect until 2013, which is also wrapped into the cost of all exams. Sources have stated that there will not be an increase in the price of the exam for the next year. The ABPN is currently developing a payment plan for residents.

The new format of the exam will consist of 420 questions and is given in two half-day sessions (210 questions each session). Questions are 30% Neurology Basic Sciences; 20% Psychiatry, Cognition and Behavior; and 50% Clinical Neurology. The Clinical Problem Solving section will contain vignettes. Some of the vignettes will have one question associated with them. Others will have multiple questions. Subsequent questions may answer a prior question; therefore you will not be permitted to go back and answer previous questions. The vignettes are not interactive as in the Step 3 exam for USMLE. There may be 15 to 20 video vignettes in the exam. It is important to note that the criterion for passing has changed. In the past the candidate would have to pass the "neurology section" and the "psychiatry section" separately to pass the overall exam. With the current exam, candidates pass if a certain number of questions are answered correctly. The

exact number is not known but it has been emphasized that the board is not trying to fail candidates and that passage will be based on statistics.

Here are some links on the ABPN website that you might find helpful:

- Example of Video for Exam www.abpn.com/candidates.htm
- The PearsonVue website has an orientation for the computer exam. (www.pearsonvue.com/abpn)
- Frequently Asked Questions (www.abpn.com/faqs.htm).
- Power Point presentation by Dr. Larry Faulkner of the ABPN concerning changes to the exam (www.abpn.com/downloads/presentations/Neuro_PartIandII_Update_files/frame.htm).
- 2008 Content outline (www.abpn.com/content_outlines.htm).

Resident-Specific Educational Course Offered at the AAN Annual Meeting By Benjamin Atkinson, MD

The third installment of the resident basic science curriculum will be offered this year at the AAN Annual Meeting in Seattle, Washington. This year's topics will be Resident Basic Science I: Neurogenetics (1AC.001, Saturday, April 25, 9:00 a.m. -12:45 p.m.) and Resident Basic Science II: Neurometabolic Disorders (1PC.001, Saturday, April 25, 2:15 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.). Topics in the past were Neuro-pharmacology, Neuropathology, Anatomy, and Physiology. The plan for this curriculum is to rotate these six topics every three years. This will mean that during a neurology resident's training he or she will be able to attend each of these topics and learn some of the fundamental basic sciences need to become a Board Certified Neurologist. You may be thinking that this does not make much sense because only a very small number of residents will be able to attend two if even three years of academy meetings. That is solved by purchasing the Virtual Annual Meeting that can be found on the following website: <http://www.marathonmultimedia.com/store/aan/index.php?categoryID=203>. These lectures as well as many other amazing lectures by world renowned faculty are included.

A special half day course on Psychiatry for Neurologists (4PC.005 – Psychiatry for the Neurologist, Tues-

day, April 28, 2:15 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.) will also be added this year. This year will also be the first year that an interactive question and answer course (2FC.005 – Continuum Test Your Knowledge: A multiple-choice Question Review, Sunday, April 26, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.) will be offered at the AAN Annual Meeting. Audience participation will be handled by using wireless balloting systems, and a short discussion will take place at the end of each question. This has the potential to be very informative and exciting.

All of this is possible by the hard work of the volunteer lecturers, and the ideas and direction of Ralph F. Jozefowicz, MD, FAAN, Education Committee Chair. So please take advantage of these offerings and pass the information on to residents and fellows in your program.

Keep Up to Date with Free AAN Podcast By Benjamin Atkinson, MD

Just over one year ago the AAN and the journal, *Neurology* began offering free weekly podcasts that supplement the print and online issues of *Neurology*. The first section of the *Neurology* podcast is an interview with an author of a featured article from that week's *Neurology*. The featured article is chosen because it is felt to be informative, important, and interesting. The featured article interview is approximately seven minutes. The focus of the interview is always on the main findings and the practical implications of the findings (e.g. how it might change practice). After the interview there is a very short report by the Residents and Fellows section of the journal entitled "E-pearl of the week." This is followed by a four-minute Q&A section on an assortment of topics, titled the "lesson of the week." The podcast closes with comments by John H. Noseworthy, MD, FAAN, editor-in-chief of *Neurology*. In all, the weekly podcast is chock full of important content yet only 20 minutes in length. Currently the podcast has 1,200 - 1,500 listeners.

Ted M. Burns, MD, Section Editor of the *Neurology* Podcast and Residency Program Director at the University of Virginia, said that the rationale for developing the podcast was to facilitate lifelong learning, particularly in light of the fact that everyone's lives are so busy and at the same time there are so many advances in neurology occurring every week. He was concerned that it was simply becoming too difficult to stay up-to-date without some assistance. Podcasts seemed like a wonderful solution to him, especially because listen-

ing is free, available to anyone in the world with an internet connection and easy access to podcasts are easily downloaded to your computer or iPod (or other player). You can listen whenever it suits you, for example on your drive to work or while exercising. Ted was also excited about the idea of being able to chat with the authors of papers just published. After all, these authors are experts and also excited about their work.

To be honest I had known about the podcast program, but did not realize how educational it could be for me. During a chat with Dr. Burns it occurred to me that the *Neurology* podcast would also be a great way to supplement my board prep. It also occurred to me that if I can dedicate 20 minutes each week to simply listening to the podcast that over the months I will learn so many things and gain so many insights that I may have otherwise missed. I have always used my iPod for music during exercise but I had never subscribed to a podcast before. It's really easy! Just start iTunes, enter the iTunes store and search "neurology." The podcast should be the first choice. Then all you need to do is click on **subscribe** (remember it's free!) and it will automatically download the newest podcast, and subsequently automatically download it every week for you. If you are interested in listening to past episodes, you can go to neurology.org and follow the podcast icon. (Dr. Burns also helps produce a neuromuscular podcast that can be found by searching "AANEM podcasts.")

I have now listened to about half of the old episodes and have found them to be a great resource for me. Some are better than others, but none of them have been bad. Dr. Burns pointed out that he thinks the last few months' podcasts are much better. He says these "new and improved" podcasts are shorter (20 minutes), with more focused questions—particularly questions that are practical to clinical care—and with more content than ever. He thinks the most recent podcasts move crisply and is quite happy with them. I have learned a lot from listening to them in time that was being used efficiently. I challenge all of the residents and fellows to subscribe to this podcast and see what you think. If you have any questions or concerns please send an e-mail to Dr. Burns at tmb8r@virginia.edu. He would also like to hear from anyone who is interested in participating in an interview.

The Consortium of Neurology Resident and Fellows Meeting is scheduled for:

Sunday, April 26, 2009
12:00 p.m. — 2:00 p.m.

RSVP to calementi@aan.com by March 3 if you plan to attend.

CNRF Chair-Elect Officer Elections

If you are interested in serving as the Chair-Elect for the CNRF for 2009 – 2010 send an email to calementi@aan.com **by Friday, February 27, 2009**. The elections for the Chair-Elect position will take place during the Residents and Fellows Luncheon on April 26, 2009 from 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. If you are interested in serving as the Chair-Elect for the CNRF, your presence at the luncheon is strongly recommended.

Residents and Fellows Career Forum and Reception

The 2009 Residents and Fellows Career Forum and Reception will be held during the AAN Annual Meeting. The specifics for the event are listed below.

Monday, April 27, 2009
6:30 p.m.-9:00 p.m.

Panel Forums

6:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

- **Fellowship Panel**

Panel Moderator: Justin C. McArthur, MBBS, MPH

Panel Members: A. Gordon Smith, MD, Deborah Hall, MD, PhD, Richard J. O'Brien, MD, PhD, Richard Leigh, MD

- **Academic/Research Panel**

Panel Moderator: Brett M. Kissela, MD, FAAN

Panel Members: Bruce R. Ransom, MD, PhD, Walter J. Koroshetz, MD, FAAN, Barbara G. Vickrey, MD, MPH, FAAN

- **Private Practice Panel**

Panel Moderator: Stephanie R. Lash, MD, FAAN

Panel Members: Michael R. Chun, MD, Lily Jung, MD, FAAN, Morris B. Chang, MD

To view a day by day activity listing see the Residents and Fellows Guide to the Annual Meeting at <http://www.aan.com/go/education/residents>

Up Coming *Continuum* Issues and Practice Guideline Topics

Continuum

February 2009 – Myasthenic Disorders and ALS
April 2009 – Neuroendocrinology
June 2009 – Critical Care Neurology
August 2009 – Neuro-ophthalmology
October 2009 – Neuropathic Pain
December 2009 – Childhood Neurologic Disorders in Adulthood

Practice Guidelines to be published in 2009

Women with Epilepsy and Pregnancy (3 guidelines)
Treatment of ALS (2 guidelines)
Evaluating Children with Microcephaly
Magnetic Resonance Perfusion/Diffusion Imaging
Driving and Cognitive Impairment

Meetings of Interest

International Stroke Conference

February 18–February 20, 2009 - San Diego, CA

American Academy of Neurology

April 25–May 2, 2009- Seattle, WA

American Academy of Sleep Medicine

June 6-June 11, 2009 - Seattle, WA

American Headache Society

September 10-September 13, 2009 - Philadelphia, PA

American Association of Neuromuscular & Electrodiagnostic Medicine

October 7–October 10, 2009 - San Diego, CA

Society of Vascular and Interventional Neurology

October 25-October 27, 2009 - Miami, FL

Neurocritical Care Society

November 11-November 14, 2009 - New Orleans, LA

American Epilepsy Society

December 4–December 8, 2009 - Boston, MA