Letter from the Chair

March 25, 2011

Dear Pain and Palliative Care Colleagues,

Our section has gathered increasing momentum in several areas, thanks to the effective work and persistence of several of our section members. Major accomplishments have included:

Anne Louise Oaklander has made significant progress in the establishment of the Mitchell B. Max Award for Neuropathic Pain. This award is in the AAN final approval stages and more information will be made available soon.

Appointment of an AAN representative, Dr. John Markman, to the FDA’s opiate decision making body, along with a position statement put out by the AAN for their Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategies (REMS) for extended-release and long-acting opioid analgesics discussed July 22-23 during the public meeting.

Appointment of an AAN representative, Dr. Charles Brock, to the AMA Pain Group who held a summit in November 2009, with continued input into the AMA initiated process of completely overhauling pain care in the United States. This report is still pending at this writing.

Excellent teamwork under the leadership of Dr. Portenoy in developing five surveys with the goal of publishing these results regarding pain care in the U.S.:

How many pain fellowships take neurologists?

How many departments have pain specialists, and how do chairs feel about pain in neurology?

What is the level of interest in pain as a specialty among neurology residents, and does it rise or fall across the 3 years of training?

What is the pain educational need among general neurologists and how can AAN help to meet it?

We communicated the need for these surveys to the AAN survey team, and they are just about done with the first one, to the neurology department chairs. Dr. David Walk has been working closely with the survey team to get this out by July 13, 2010.

Election of two councilors: Dr. John Farrar and Dr. Marco Pappagallo.

Appointment of our own editor to the editorial board of Neurology Today, Dr. Anne Louise Oaklander. This will be the first time that the editorial board includes someone with a pain interest.

The 2011 Annual Meeting education program is currently being finalized. Watch the sections web page for a listing of section related programs!

We are moving forward as a section. I would like to see more activity where needed on the palliative care side, but I am sure this will come with time. I hope all of you are as excited as I am to work with such a wonderful team, full of energy, know-how and dedication. I want to also take this opportunity to thank our section liaison, Julie Grengs, for her incredible support throughout this past year, without which nothing would have happened.

Best regards,

Tom Chelimsky, MD, FAAN