EBM and Your Career

Neurologists feel an urgency to continuously improve and demonstrate that they are providing high quality care.\(^1\) While that urgency is common, finding resources to help one accomplish that goal is often very difficult. These days, it’s not enough to know you provide quality care, you have support this with evidence. Over twenty years have passed since the Journal of the American Medical Association published the JAMA article that predicted evidence-based medicine (EBM) as a new method of teaching and practicing medicine.\(^2\) Since then, EBM education has become standard in much undergraduate and postgraduate medical education,\(^3\) but access to EBM education is not always consistent or straightforward for practicing neurologists.

The American Academy of Neurology believes that utilizing the principles of EBM helps neurologists synthesize literature and research, and will enable them to reduce practice variations, improve the quality of care, increase patient engagement, and reduce costs. Comparative effectiveness research (CER) findings are being integrated into guidelines and quality measures, formularies, and reimbursement decisions. In the age of a tremendous overload of clinical and quality research, a solid foundation in EBM can help the neurologist understand what is valuable and worth implementing.

HOW WILL THE AAN HELP YOU WITH EBM EDUCATION?

The AAN currently offers in-depth EBM education in a two-day didactic and interactive classroom training. EBM Toolkit was originally created as a resource to program directors hoping to educate residents in EBM. Since the education in EBM Toolkit is universally valuable to all neurologists, the training has been adapted to meet the needs of all AAN’s members. The training introduces new concepts and refreshes a wide variety of analytical skills in case study format. Using real clinical examples, EBM faculty explore systematic reviews and meta-analysis, regression analysis, observational studies, randomized controlled trials, guideline development, and much more. One participant noted, “In two days, the EBM faculty refreshed 2 full years of graduate statistical analysis – and better than how I learned in the first place.”

The AAN and Neurology\(^{®}\) are collaborating to make the education from EBM Toolkit more accessible to the general membership. Starting in October 2013, EBM education will be available for the online Neurology reader. Using therapeutic articles as case studies, faculty will highlight specific components of EBM, delivering the learning in small portions.

Both forms of AAN’s EBM education offer CME. More information can be found about EBM Toolkit and Neurology’s EBM project at AAN.com/go/education/online/ebm, or by contacting Rebecca Penfold Murray at rpenfoldmurray@aan.com.