

NEWSLETTER

CONGRESS OF NEUROLOGICAL SURGEONS

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President's Letter

I am extremely honored to serve as President of the Congress of Neurological Surgeons (CNS) for the coming year. I will do my best to direct the activities of the organization and to move the CNS forward as we enter a new, exciting, and very challenging era for neurosurgery.

1) The Head and Spinal Cord Injury Prevention Program, sponsored by the CNS and the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS) has continued to expand, and has increased its national visibility. The national coordinator of the program, Ms. Louise S. Miller, is now on board to direct the activities. This endeavor requires the input and involvement of our entire membership in order to make this worthwhile project function. The national office of the Head and Spinal Cord Injury Prevention Program is located at 22 South Washington Street, Park Ridge, Illinois 60068, if you need assistance or information about the program.

2) 1989 should prove to be a very challenging time for neurosurgery. It should also be a very exciting time for all of us. The coming year will see the beginning of a period designated as the "Decade of the Brain." This program was initiated by the House Health and Human Services Appropriations Subcommittee, and is designed to provide increased visibility and also funding for research in disorders of the central nervous system.

The CNS and the AANS are working together on this important project and intend to be active participants with the public and private sectors to assure advances are made in basic, clinical, and prevention programs in the neurosciences. A very ambitious agenda has already been proposed. All of neurosurgery must be involved in the implementation of this important program. It represents a tremendous opportunity to advance neuroscience.

3) The CNS consists of a membership of approximately 3,000. Its wealth lies in the relative youth of many of its members. There are many areas within the CNS where the younger members can, and in fact do, make many very important contributions. I would encourage you to become involved, to be a "participating member." There are numerous opportunities within the CNS to



J. Michael McWhorter, M.D., President

become involved and to lend your energy, your expertise, and your enthusiasm.

4) The 39th Annual Meeting of the CNS will be held in Atlanta, Georgia, from October 28 to November 2, 1989. The city of Atlanta is one of the premier convention cities in the United States. Atlanta combines the traditions of the Old South with the cosmopolitan activities of a delightful city, and will share with you its ambiance, history, and excitement.

The Honored Guest for the 1989 Annual Meeting will be Dr. Thor Sundt of the Mayo Clinic. Dr. Sundt's contributions to the field of neurosurgery are legion, and we are especially fortunate to have him share his expertise and experience with us.

The Annual Meeting Chairman is Dr. L. Nick Hopkins. Dr. Martin Camins, the Scientific Program Chairman, is planning a spectacular scientific program. The Local Arrangements Committee, under the direction of Dr. Daniel and Molly Barrow, has arranged an array of delightful social events designed to introduce you to the exciting city of Atlanta.

Barbara and I look forward to seeing you in Atlanta in October.

Special Alert

1. The Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) commissioned the Harvard/AMA group to develop a Resource-Based Relative Value Scale (RBRVS). This started in January, 1986, and the first phase covering eighteen specialties was completed in July, 1988. The remaining subspecialties, including neurosurgery, are to be surveyed in 1988-89. The ultimate purpose is to develop a fee schedule to be used initially for Medicare.

2. A random sample of 100 neurosurgeons will be selected from the AMA Physician Masterfile. If you are contacted, please participate. You will receive instructions from a research survey group and a list of services and procedures about which you will be questioned. A telephone interview will occur within seven to ten days following the initial contact. It is extremely important that you review your hospital's OR log so that you have an accurate idea as to the amount of time you actually spend doing a specific procedure.

3. It is important not to guess. **If you do not perform a specific service or procedure on a regular basis, decline to provide any information for that service or procedure even though the interviewer might prod you to do so.**

4. You will be asked to state:

- a) The time spent doing the actual service or procedure.
- b) The time spent on activities related to the service or procedure.
- c) An estimate for each service or procedure regarding the amount of work compared to a standard, technical skill, physical effort, mental effort and iatrogenic risk involved.

5. After the interview, notify Carl H.

Hauber, C.A.E., Executive Director of the AANS at (312) 692-9500.

Washington Update

The first phase of the Harvard/AMA RBRVS Study now is history. The report has been submitted to HCFA. It has been published in several forms. The complete work is available in two volumes totaling approximately 2,000 pages and can be obtained for \$250.00 by calling (617) 495-2175. The best and more practical review is the series of three articles in the September 29, 1988, issue of *The New England Journal of Medicine* and

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