

NEONATAL/PERINATAL MEDICINE FELLOW'S MEETING

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2008

JUDY ASCHNER, MD

In an effort to define how the Section can best meet the needs of trainees and what role trainees are willing and able to play in the Section, we convened a meeting of fellow representatives from each of the 10 districts. This meeting took place on Friday, October 10, 2008 from 10am to 5pm prior to the Keynote Address by David Stevenson and the Opening Reception and Poster Walk on Friday evening. The Section paid for one fellow per district to attend the Fellow's meeting and NCE. In addition, some districts sponsored additional fellows to attend so that in all we had 16-20 fellows participating at various points throughout the day. The session was lead by Linda Van Marter and Judy Aschner.

Linda Van Marter started the meeting with an overview of the Section, its mission, organizational structure and myriad of activities and active liaisons. Much of this came as news to the fellows in the room who seemed completely unaware and amazed at the range of Section activities, and benefits of membership. Most fellows in attendance were 3rd year fellows and most did not know that they were Section members. The fellows were also unaware of the ONTPD or the activities of that organization. Many of the items they later identified as something they needed are available on the fellow's page of the ONTPD website, but they did not know there was such an organization, let alone a website with a page designed especially for them.

Linda's presentation was followed by presentations by Jennifer Linebarger, Chair of the Section on Medical Student, Resident and Fellow Trainees and Bryan Wohlwend, a member of the executive committee (District VI rep) of the Young Physician's Section. By the end of the three presentations, the fellows got the clear message that they were very much wanted in multiple AAP Sections and perhaps were a bit confused about the pathway to membership and where they best fit in.

Judy Aschner next asked the group to address the question of whether NPM fellows should have their own organization and if so, how it should be structured and where they might intersect with the SoPPE and the Academy. The fellows were asked to break in to three small working groups, identify a team spokesperson and brainstorm the following questions: (1) What role should fellows play in the SoPPE? (2) Would fellows benefit from a National NPM Fellow's Group? (3) How can the section better serve trainees and young neonatologists? (4) What are the current opportunities and barriers to networking and/or to inter-institutional collaborations among fellows? For the next 90+ minutes the small break-out teams discussed these four questions and then reported back to the entire group. The following items were identified:

1.) What role should fellows play in the SoPPE?

- Definite interest in a parallel structure for fellow's representation to SoPPE and ONTPD with reps from each district whose role would be to communicate back to the fellows in each district about overall activities at SoPPE and ONTPD and serve as members of various committees. Communication with fellows about activities, resources and opportunities for involvement came up repeatedly throughout the day as an area in need of enhancement.

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- Program Directors and Division Chiefs do not do a good job communicating with fellows about the Section or even about the ONTPD. With fellow representation at the executive committee and ONTPD, the fellows would be responsible for passing relevant information on to the other
- Fellow webmaster(s) for SoPPE website and/or ONTPD website.
- On line submission of SoPPE membership application with option to join other sections by just checking the box (YPS or SMRF); make it transparent how to join, fill out application etc; programs or SoPPE should pay the fee.

2.) **Would fellow's benefit from a National NPM Fellow's Group?**

Consensus was YES and that this group should include members transitioning from Fellow to Young Neonatologist. Roles of the organization would include bridging the gap between fellowship and first career job, dissemination of information about meetings, opportunities and resources and might include sponsorship of a "retreat" at the end of the 2nd year that would include fellows from all programs or at least representatives from all districts for networking, information about how to job search, negotiate contracts and learn about different practice models.

3.) **How can the SoPPE better serve trainees and young neonatologists?**

- Communication, communication, communication!
- Better advertisements of available job opportunities in both private practice and academia. Would like this to be some form of direct communication with fellows, not just through the program director (ie a centralized website of available positions). (fear of disappointed PD and faculty if interested in PP jobs)
- Better advertisement of awards and funding sources for fellows and early career neonatologists.
- Better advertisement of educational venues (review courses)
- Description of prototypes of jobs on the website, ie clinician-educator, clinician-scientist, private practice with typical salaries, work schedules, benefits and other aspects
- Would like information on average salaries readily available on website (not aware these data are published annually)
- Access to list of fellowship programs and current fellows contact information (not aware that directory is on the AAP and ONTPD websites)
- Advocacy for maternity leave for fellows, etc
- Board preparation materials – more longitudinal than NeoPrep; more specific and in-depth than NeoReviews
- On-line weekly board review course
- On-line coding course for transitioning fellows
- Negotiation skills/contracts
- Research section on website – grant opportunities, examples of successful grants (K-awards etc)
- Question/Discussion board open to all
- Central website for fellows
- Leadership training at District/regional level
- Networking

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- Mentoring
- Central listing of all NICUs

(4) What are the current opportunities and barriers to networking and/or to inter-institutional collaborations among fellows?

- Time
- Competition between institutions (sense that local politics should not get in the way of fellow's networking and sharing educational opportunities).

Following this very interactive and energized discussion, Paul Levy – CEO from Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center presented a 3 hour long “Strategic Negotiation Seminar” that was both informative and interactive. All agreed that negotiation skills are important in both academic and private practice medicine and that formal training in negotiations is important. It was also clear some of us are better at it than others.

At the conclusion of what was a highly successful day, the group moved to the Colonnade Hotel (where the ONTPD meeting had been held concurrent with the fellow's meeting) for David Stevenson's Keynote Address and for the Poster session and reception. These were all part of the “fellow's track” at the NCE and were very well attended and received.