

THE Embolus

A publication of the Society of NeuroInterventional Surgery

SNIS 17th Annual Meeting Preview

The Society of NeuroInterventional Surgery's (SNIS) 17th Annual Meeting is scheduled for August 4-7. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, SNIS is closely monitoring the situation and has determined a virtual meeting is the best way to bring our field together at this time.

With abstract review underway, we have an exciting program in development that will feature the latest innovations in the field of neurointervention. From thought-provoking sessions to visionary abstracts, this year's Annual Meeting promises to educate, engage and inspire.

A few Didactic Sessions on the program to look forward to include "Farther, Better, Faster: New Frontiers in Stroke Management," "Neurointervention in a Changing World: Hot Topics 2020," and "Pediatric Thrombectomy and Beyond: Big Problems in Small Patients." In addition, our Neuroanatomy Master Classes will continue on topics like simplifying spinal vascular anatomy and pediatrics and embryology.

We are pleased to welcome three new partners in scientific programming this year: the AANS/CNS Joint Cerebrovascular Section, the European Society of Minimally Invasive Neurological Therapy (ESMINT) and the Australian & New Zealand Society of Neuroradiology (ANZSNR). These active members of the program committee are bringing a wealth of ideas and energy to the meeting and we are grateful for their collaboration.



The SNIS Fellows Course also will be offered in 2020 following the Annual Meeting, continuing our commitment to the next generation of practitioners who will build upon and push forward the field of neurointervention. Our vision is to equip and empower first- and second-year fellows to advance minimally invasive surgical treatments for neurovascular diseases—helping to demonstrate the tremendous value our relatively new field already has brought to medicine and to patient care.

We are currently designing formats for the Fellows Course that will allow for training across the full spectrum of neurointervention, such as Q&As, discussion panels, and more.

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A New Reality for Neurointervention during COVID-19

As president of the Society of NeuroInterventional Surgery, my main goal is always to raise awareness of the field of neurointervention and be an advocate for patient care. In the difficult reality we are facing amid the COVID-19 pandemic, I am reminded of just how important it is to support our members' critical work to provide the best patient care possible.

To lessen the spread of coronavirus, some neurointerventionalists have responded by adjusting care protocols, taking added precautions, like the use of N95 respirators and surgical masks, and relying on telemedicine practices to reach others. At Houston Methodist, we have shut down all clinics, and are only taking

emergent cases, subarachnoid hemorrhage stroke, and bleeds. We have been fitted for N95 masks and will wear protective clothing for patients coming through the emergency room. By the time you read this edition of *The Embolus*, we may have an entirely new set of care procedures to follow.

In these stressful and uncertain times, it is important that we stay connected and support each other as we experience disruptions in care procedures and our day-to-day work as health care providers. I encourage all of you to reach out with words of advice or encouragement on SNIS Connect and social media channels. My advice to the SNIS membership at this time is to read the guidance from SNIS

regarding the care of emergent neurointerventional patients in the setting of COVID-19 ([SNIS COVID Guidance](#)) and review the statement from the Society for Neuroscience in Anesthesiology and Critical Care (SNACC) on Anesthetic Management of Endovascular Treatment of Acute Ischemic Stroke during COVID-19 ([SNACC Consensus Statement](#)). I want to extend a special thanks to Justin Fraser, MD for his work on both of these documents. Also, if you missed it live, go online to watch our webinar on Neurointerventional Guidance for COVID-19 ([COVID Webinar](#)).

Masks up everyone! Stay strong, be safe, and thank you for all you do for the patients who count on you.

NOTICED ANYTHING DIFFERENT ABOUT US?

SNISonline.org recently received a NEW LOOK! We hope the improved navigation and refreshed design helps you find what you need quickly and easily. *Take a look around ...*



www.snisonline.org

Journal of NeuroInterventional Surgery Update

Felipe C. Albuquerque, MD / Editor-in-Chief



The March 2020 issue of the *Journal of NeuroInterventional Surgery (JNIS)* features a variety of compelling articles, with topics ranging from effects of antiplatelet therapy to an investigation of microcatheter shaping technologies.

Flow diverters (FD) are now being used with more frequency in the setting of acutely ruptured aneurysms. However, thromboembolic and hemorrhagic complications are feared given the need for anti-platelet therapy. A study in the March issue evaluates complications, as well as clinical and angiographic outcomes, in patients treated for ruptured aneurysms with FD. The authors conclude that FD treatment is potentially associated with higher rates of procedure-related complications including aneurysm re-rupture.

Another article describes the results of a study that delved into the application of

three-dimensional (3D) printing technology in microcatheter shaping. This technology potentially could facilitate aneurysm embolization by improving catheter stability.

Also in the March issue, a meta-analysis of clinical studies including outcomes of 2,486 patients identifies the protective effects of antiplatelet therapy before coiling of unruptured aneurysms. The analysis revealed that peri-procedural antiplatelet therapy was associated with a low symptomatic thromboembolic event rate.

Another highlight from this issue includes a systematic review designed to estimate the prevalence of emergent large vessel occlusion (ELVO) among patients with acute ischemic stroke (AIS), with emphasis on definitions and methods used by different studies. The method of AIS denominator determination was the most significant predictor of ELVO estimates.

Podcast Update

In the January 2020 episode, “Standards for European training requirements in interventional neuroradiology guidelines,” I spoke with Istvan Szikora from the National Institute of Clinical Neurosciences in Budapest, Hungary. We discussed the official document of Standards for European training requirements in interventional neuroradiology guidelines by the Division of Neuroradiology/Section of Radiology European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS), in cooperation with the Division of Interventional Radiology/UEMS, the European Society of Neuroradiology (ESNR), and the European Society of Minimally Invasive Neurological Therapy (ESMINT).

In the February 2020 episode, “Field triage for endovascular stroke therapy,” I spoke with Mahesh Jayaraman, MD, and Ryan McTaggart, MD, about their paper on the subject. This discussion explored the differences in outcomes in patients sent to a primary stroke center versus those sent to comprehensive stroke centers slightly further away. Triage to a comprehensive stroke center was associated with faster time to endovascular therapy, no delay to alteplase, and less disability at 90 days.

Visit soundcloud.com/bmjpodcasts/sets/jnis-podcast to hear these episodes and others.

Article Spotlight



In “European Stroke Organisation (ESO) – European Society for Minimally Invasive Neurological Therapy (ESMINT) Guidelines on Mechanical Thrombectomy in Acute Ischemic Stroke,” the authors explore MT as the cornerstone of acute ischemic stroke management in patients with ELVO to assist physicians in their decisions pertaining to therapy.

To further the knowledge that MT is the standard of care in patients with ELVO-related acute stroke, and that appropriate patient selection and timely reperfusion are crucial, this study dug deeper.

The guidelines statement recommend MT plus best medical management (BMM) to improve functional outcome in patients with ELVO-related acute ischemic stroke within 6 hours after symptom onset. In addition, the authors found moderate quality of evidence to recommend MT plus BMM in the 6- to 24-hour time window in patients meeting the eligibility criteria of published randomized trials.

Journal of NeuroInterventional Surgery Update

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Editor Promotions

Finally, we would like to recognize and congratulate the editors at *JNIS* who recently joined or were promoted to new positions.

David Fiorella

Promoted to Deputy Editor from Associate Editor

Joshua Hirsch

Promoted to Deputy Editor from Associate Editor

Kyle Fargen

Promoted to Associate Editor from Social Media Assistant Editor

Ashutosh Jadhav

Promoted to Associate Editor from Social Media Assistant Editor

Jens Fiehler

New Associate Editor

Jim Milburn

New Associate Editor

Gabor Toth

New Associate Editor

Phil White

New Associate Editor

David Steinman

New Associate Editor, Basic Science

Waleed Brinjikji

Assistant Editor, Technical Videos (new position created at *JNIS*)

Maxim Mokin

Assistant Editor, Technical Videos (new position created at *JNIS*)

Dorothea Altschul

New Assistant Editor, Social Media

Michael Levitt

New Assistant Editor, Social Media

Staff Spotlight



In his eight years at SNIS, Senior Manager of Member Services Anthony Portillo has had his hand in a bit of everything; his workdays are rarely the same.

This time of year, he is keeping busy with member outreach activities, which can range from managing day-to-day questions to embarking on larger marketing projects. Portillo handles dues notifications and yearly updates, the membership database, and new applications processing. He also works closely with several member committees — including Young Professionals, Health Policy & Economics, and Pediatrics — as well as manages and edits the SNIS member forum.

When he's not coordinating membership needs, he's managing registration for

SNIS's monthly webinars and annual conferences.

"Interacting with members online or in person at the meetings is never boring. Plus, the travel that our conferences require always makes the meetings feel refreshed," Portillo said. "It's also nice to start new initiatives after the busy meeting season ends."

Currently, Portillo is working to create a mobile app and manage registration for the upcoming Annual Meeting.

When SNIS moved to a teleworking environment a few years ago, Portillo was the first employee working remote full-time from Virginia Beach, Virginia. However, the geographical distance hasn't hindered his work relationships or his productivity. Still, it's nice to see your colleagues once in a while.

"When I attended our executive director's wedding a couple of years ago, there were a lot of SNIS members there," he said. "Hanging out with people we usually only see in a professional setting was a lot of fun. This is a pretty tightly knit community and we've all created a lot of relationships over the years."

Outside of work, Portillo enjoys spending time with his wife, Lauren, and his new baby girl, Rosa Stephanie Portillo. She was born on January 27 and currently weighs 10 lb., 6 oz. Portillo noted, "She's definitely a little more aware and interactive now. She likes making baby noises at us when we play with her."





Honoring Grant B. Hieshima, MD – a Founding Father of Our Specialty

Steven W. Hetts, MD

Our mentor and friend Grant Hieshima passed away in the summer of 2019. His legacy establishing the Neurointerventional Radiology (NIR) programs first at UCSF has been of immeasurable value to patients and trainees. From the first detachable balloons for brain trauma and aneurysm treatment, to pioneering work in catheter and coil design, to the development of neuroendovascular therapy for stroke and vascular malformations, Grant's contributions to our field are legendary. Randy Higashida, Grant's first clinical fellow, wrote a tribute to Grant in JNIS (<https://jniss.bmj.com/content/11/12/e11>). Grant's humble humanity with and boundless compassion for patients at their time of crisis set an example that, to this day, remind all of us in the field why we choose to do this work.

I had the good fortune to work with Grant in the summer of 1993 when I was a college student. He was interested in exploring how neurointerventionalists could cope with the personal grief physicians feel when their patients have adverse outcomes. I helped him and another student with that project, attending the Jackson Hole complications course, interviewing neurointerventionalists about their coping mechanisms. Our work was later published in *AJNR* in 1995 as "...And Do No Harm," one of my first academic papers and one of his last. That early experience determined my career choice and I have never second-guessed it. Working with my head, my heart, and my hands like Grant to take care of children and adults with neurovascular disease has made me who I am.

As practitioners of neuroendovascular surgery, we all owe gratitude to Grant as well as to his peers and those who have

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followed him. Grant was one of the founding fathers of our young specialty. SNIS features a keynote speech by a pioneer in our field each year. Grant gave the first Luminary Lecture in 2010 during the SNIS Annual Meeting in Carlsbad, California. In that talk he highlighted both the amazing progress in interventional neuroradiology over the past four decades as well as the coping mechanisms that he had adopted in order to overcome the grief he experienced when his patients had bad outcomes. In

subsequent years, other luminaries have shared their wisdom with the society. As our professional society matures, it is incumbent upon our members to honor the giants on whose shoulders we are lucky to stand.

In honor of Grant, we are leading an effort to rename the Luminary Lecture for the SNIS Annual Meeting to the Grant Hieshima Luminary Lecture. Our goal is to raise a \$100,000 endowment over the next 5 years in order to permanently endow this lectureship. Disbursements from this fund will pay for the luminary lecturer's travel, lodging, and a small honorarium. If we raise at least \$20,000 by June 30, 2020, the Lecture will be officially renamed prior to the printing of the programs for the SNIS Annual Meeting this August. I want to take this opportunity to ask you to please **donate to the SNIS Foundation in honor of the Grant Hieshima Luminary Lecture.**

For charitable giving to the SNIS Foundation, please contact Marie Williams, Executive Director (williams@snisonline.org). I would love to speak with you regarding these or any other matters regarding Grant's legacy; please do not hesitate to contact me at steven.hetts@ucsf.edu.




Get Ahead of Stroke Update

USING LEVEL DESIGNATIONS CAN SAVE LIVES

#SurviveStroke

LEVEL 1 CENTER	
Offers full spectrum of neuroendovascular therapy	YES
Minimum # of patients/year	250
Open neurosurgical services on-site	YES



The Get Ahead of Stroke campaign kicked off 2020 by unveiling a new visual brand. Through the locator pin icon, the logo now communicates the important element of location in treating stroke patients. A revised tagline also pushes what the campaign wants every stroke patient to be able to do: *Arrive. Survive. Thrive.®*

In addition, the campaign was excited to reveal a new heat map feature at getaheadofstroke.org/state-policies. This interactive graphic shows where the campaign has been working to update stroke protocols so that more people can have access to a Level 1 stroke center. It also outlines where more work is needed, highlighting the states where no stroke protocols currently exist. The heat map will be updated as legislative efforts push forward.

We are also pleased to share that the next update to the Stroke Scales for EMS mobile app is now available for download. The update adds the Miami Emergency Neurologic Deficit (MEND) exam and research citations for all scales in the app. To download, search “Stroke Scales for

The campaign has continued to make legislative progress in working to change state policies so that patients reach the appropriate facility the first time.

EMS” on the App Store and on Google Play.

The campaign has continued to make legislative progress in working to change state policies so that patients reach the appropriate facility the first time. A few highlights of our recent progress include:

- In January, Donald Frei, MD, past president of SNIS, delivered a presentation at a National EMS Advisory Council (NEMSAC) meeting at the U.S. Department of Transportation in Washington, DC. Dr. Frei advocated for updating EMS protocols to ensure

severe stroke patients are taken to Level 1 stroke centers and highlighted the Get Ahead of Stroke campaign’s efforts in pursuit of this goal. NEMSAC members and OEMS staff in attendance offered positive feedback and provided examples concerning the importance of having protocols in place to ensure the timely triage and transport of stroke patients, particularly those with ELVO.

- Amid the nationwide COVID-19 pandemic, we are remaining engaged with legislators and staff as well as third-party stakeholders through virtual meetings and conference calls for the foreseeable future.
- The campaign also continues its advocacy work in Massachusetts. In New York, the state’s Chief Medical Officer recently expressed interest in learning more about the protocols adopted in Rhode Island. In Ohio, the campaign is continuing to conduct outreach to prospective bill sponsors while primary sponsors Senators Eklund and Antonio remain committed to formally introducing our legislation.



NVQI-QOD Registry Update

To provide greater opportunity for collecting and analyzing perioperative and follow-up data, SNIS and the NeuroPoint Alliance (NPA) have combined their respective registries, NeuroVascular Quality Initiative (NVQI) and the Quality Outcomes Database Neurovascular (QOD-NV), into one registry.

NVQI-QOD is governed by the SNIS Patient Safety Organization (PSO), which helps physicians and other health care providers share and analyze clinical outcomes and data associated with patient safety.

SNIS PSO Medical Director Sameer Ansari, MD, Ph.D., added that there also is a new, updated and enhanced acute ischemic stroke module. He also noted that the merger of the NPA's QOD cerebrovascular registry and

ongoing center transitions is expected to grow the size of the NVQI-QOD participation to more than 40 institutions. There also is a new, updated intracranial aneurysm registry expected to be available late this year.

"The first quarterly site-specific SNIS PSO feedback and education report will be sent to all participating centers in April," Dr. Ansari said. "This first report will focus on ER presentation to groin puncture time from the AIS thrombectomy module."

For additional information about participating in the NVQI-QOD, contact:

NVQI-QOD
nvqi-qod@m2s.com
nvqi-qod.org
603-298-6717

SNIS Insights: Online Webinar Series

The SNIS Insights: Online Webinar Series offers an intriguing look into techniques and valuable learning opportunities, which has resulted in many repeat viewers. In response to the impact that the COVID-19 crisis is having on our neuro-interventional communities, SNIS is offering free weekly webinars on a variety of topics to support the practice of neuro-intervention and offer insights and best practices while we navigate these challenging times. The first webinar in this weekly series, "SNIS Special Webinar: Neurointerventional Guidance for COVID-19," was held on April 2 and is now available to watch on-demand. It features presentations from Tao Hong, MD, Michael Levitt, MD, J Mocco, MD, and Leonardo Renieri, MD.

Members can register for upcoming webinars by going to www.snisonline.org/insights, where they also can view previously recorded sessions. These include topics ranging from vertebral augmentation and pediatric neurointervention to cerebral vasospasm and thrombectomy patient selection.

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN.

SNIS 17th Annual Meeting & Fellows Course

**Tuesday, August 4 -
Saturday, August 8, 2020**

<https://www.snisonline.org/meetings/snis-17th-annual-meeting/>



Programming in
conjunction with:



Calendar of Events

Stroke Awareness Month
May

National Nurses Day
May 6

National Nurses Week
May 6-12

National EMS Week
May 17-23



Members Only Discussion

Join the conversation to network, find out about upcoming events, discuss questions with colleagues, and more!

Visit <http://connect.snisonline.org/home>

The Embolus

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