President's Message
The ASNR: A Translational Think Tank!

Anna Barrett

Between 2006 and 2010, Leslie Gonzalez Rothi, Charles Levy, and I wrote a series of editorials and articles in which we challenged the idea that translation has to be defined narrowly, as the means by which bench research leads to new Phase III disease treatments (Rothi, 2006; Barrett and Rothi, 2006; Rothi and Levy, 2007a; 2007b 2007c; 2007d; Barrett, 2010). We called for rehabilitation scientists to consider a much more daunting translational challenge: how to apply developed concepts cross fields and in new ways. This endeavor requires the translational scientist to straddle scientific cultures, surmounting limitations in their traditions and assumptions.

The ASNR is not only a special organization to promote knowledgable rehabilitation practice and nurture rehabilitation science. It actively supports the interchange between practitioners and scientists, and as such it is one of the most precious translational resources. The ASNR is a translational “think tank”—an organization eliminating the most common translational obstacles (Sung et al., 2003): distance between key people operating at different stages in the translational continuum between science and practice and health policy; administrative barriers preventing cross-departmental or cross-institutional communication and collaboration.

HELP US USE OUR MOST VALUABLE RESOURCE

Our translational resource is our interdisciplinary membership, which crosses discipline lines and spans the continuum from basic science to practice. Here is my translational challenge—if you choose to accept it! I encourage all ASNR members to use the ASNR Directory, NNR, or your personal contacts to identify someone in a field that fascinates you, about whose activities you think you, and ASNR, need to learn more.

Write to me, and tell me why!!! It is possible that such a person can help us reach out to other organizations and make our initiatives more effective—the current task of our Liason Committee, chaired by Krish Sathian, MD, PhD. We will definitely profile that person, and introduce him or her to you, and our members and community.

Although here in the Northeast spring came in with snow and hail, I hope it is wonderful for the rest of you, and that you enjoy some beautiful outdoor activities with your loved ones and family!

References

In Memory of Joel Feigenson, MD

On February 18, 2011, the Neurorehabilitation community lost a dedicated, passionate advocate who was also one of the initial practitioners of the Neurorehabilitation field. Joel S. Feigenson, MD passed way at St. Vincent’s Medical Center in Bridgeport, Connecticut, USA. Dr. Feigenson was a dedicated Neurologist for 40 years. He was one of the most humane and compassionate physicians one is fortunate to be acquainted with as a fellow professional and friend.

Following a childhood in White Plains, N.Y, USA, Dr. Feigenson attended Columbia University in New York. He then studied medicine at New York University (NYU) Medical School. Dr. Feigenson also completed his residency in Neurology at NYU. Following his residency, Dr. Feigenson developed the Stroke Unit at the Burke Rehabilitation Center. Dr. Feigenson later joined Associated Neurologists in Bridgeport, Connecticut. He designed and directed dedicated inpatient rehabilitation units, first at Park City and then at St. Vincent’s Hospitals. Dr. Feigenson was also medical director of Rehabilitation at the Hospitals.

Dr. Feigenson wrote a number of neurorehabilitation topic papers published in several journals, particularly Stroke and JAMA, regarding stroke rehabilitation and stroke outcome. His initial papers were published in 1977, many years before Neurology Section on Neurorehabilitation of the American Academy of Neurology was established in 1985. The American Society of Neurorehabilitation (ASNRe) was not created until 1990.

Dr. Feigenson was active in the Neurorehabilitation community. He served on the Board of Directors of the ASNR from 2004 until 2010. He additionally served as the Webmaster for the ASNR webpage. Dr. Feigenson was active in the Stroke Council as well.

Page 2 - Neurorhabilitation News

continued on page 2
Jeffrey Samuels, MD

The ASNR Practice Committee is exploring opportunities to work with ACRM to assess guidelines and other quality measures of Rehabilitation in neurologic patients.

Robert C. Wagenaar

First of all, I would like to thank the 2011 ASNR committee members Richard Bohannon, Stanley Thomas Carmichael, Jim Lysney, Douglas Katz, Richard Macko, Michael Reding, Michael Weinrich and Barbara Weissman, in making the 2011 ACRM/ASNR Joint Education Conference in Atlanta an exciting event. We have monthly phone conference calls and so far the main topics discussed included updates on pre-conference, symposium, and oral/poster presentation submissions, sponsorships and funding of workshops and symposiums, outcomes survey 2010 ACRM/ASNR conference and conference template. So far we have the following outcomes:

1. Five pre-conference workshops were submitted and accepted. Topics include non-invasive brain stimulation after stroke, rehabilitation and contracture reduction in spinal cord injuries, quality measures for rehabilitation and quality and applicability of systematic reviews.

2. We accepted thirty-six out of 56 symposium submissions. There were more submissions compared to last year and the quality of the submissions was excellent.

3. Currently we are in the process of evaluating abstracts for scientific papers and posters.

4. The ASNR plenary session will take place on the Thursday morning, the first conference day. We are really pleased that Dr. Carolee Winstein has accepted the invitation by the ASNR conference committee to organize a plenary session on “The Future of Clinical Trials in Stroke Neurorehabilitation: Rationale, Challenges, and Opportunities for Innovative Approaches”.

5. The Sheperd Center in Atlanta will support the conference by organizing the Gala (incl. award session). The event will be combined with the ACRM President Reception and will take place in the Aquarium. There will be several bars and heavy hors’douvres spread throughout the aquarium.

Mike Reding, MD

Dr. Mindy Aisen, our past ASNR Finance Committee Chairperson will be unable to continue her successful fundraising for our organization due to other compelling time constraints. In 2010, Dr. Aisen was able to obtain about $50,000 in sponsorship for the ASNR. As past Medical Director of the United Cerebral Palsy Foundation Dr. Aisen has had many years of experience raising money for not-for profit institutions. The ASNR Board of Directors is seeking a Volunteer with sufficient skills and focus from within our organization to continue Dr. Aisen’s success.

Finance Committee Chairperson’s Responsibilities:
1. Work with ASNR Board of Directors and L&L management to solicit sponsorship and donations for ASNR activities.
2. Reach out to ASNR members to identify potential donors willing to support our ASNR Education and Research initiatives.
3. Cultivate ongoing support from past sponsors.
4. Work in collaboration with other ASNR Committees to improve the financial support of our organization: Building and Retaining Membership, Marketing of ASNR within the Rehabilitation Community, etc.
Everyone welcome!
After daily work sessions, enjoy the heart of the business and theatre districts, trendy restaurants and art galleries. Plus, scenic views of the Chicago River just steps from fabulous shopping on Michigan Avenue.

Brain Injury Interdisciplinary Special Interest Group
Outcome Measurement Networking Group
Spinal Cord Injury Special Interest Group
Stroke Networking Group

April 28 to May 1, 2011
Westin Chicago River North

Save the Date
ACRM Mid Year Meeting
Where ACRM Special Interest & Networking Groups Come Together!
The ASNR has established a Liaison Committee to facilitate interactions with other organizations whose members are likely to be interested in ASNR activities. Such interactions could take the form of joint meetings or workshops, but, most importantly, we are keen to increase the membership of ASNR by attracting interested people from these organizations. It is very clear that the Neurorehabilitation community, including clinicians and scientists from a variety of disciplines and backgrounds, is growing rapidly and that there is considerable interest in advancing Neurorehabilitation by more effective translation of science into the clinic. This fits well with the mission of ASNR and the spirit of recent meetings. Yet, attendance at the annual meeting by ASNR members is still relatively weak, so we need to explore ways to attract people who share our interests in Neurorehabilitation but do not identify with the ASNR.

At the request of our President, Anna Barrett, I have agreed to chair this committee. At present, the members of this committee include representation from the AAN (Jeff Samuels), Canadian Stroke Network (Gail Essex), APTA (Judy Deutsch) and ACRM (Doug Katz, Steve Page). Eventually, we would also like to include representation from other communities: e.g., OT, SLP, SW, Neuropsychology. If you have any thoughts about ASNR members who belong to one or other of these disciplines, or could represent another group, please let me know.

Existing or prospective ASNR members are welcome to contact me to make comments or suggestions about the Liaison Committee and its activities at any time.

**Liaison Committee**

Krish Sathian, MD, PhD
Professor of Neurology, Rehabilitation Medicine & Psychology, Emory University; Director, Neurorehabilitation Program, Department of Neurology, Emory University; Medical Director, Center for Systems Imaging, Emory University; Interim Director, Atlanta VAMC Rehabilitation R&D Center of Excellence

The ASNR Sponsored Traumatic Brain Injury Workshop at Burke Rehabilitation Hospital, White Plains, NY this past December 3-4 was well attended and was given rave reviews by those present. Dr. Barry Jordan, MD, MPH, was the workshop director. The workshop was designed to span the entire spectrum of traumatic brain injury from pre-hospital and critical care management to community re-integration. Topics covered TBI among special populations, including pediatric, athletic, and military personnel. Special attention was given to the management of those with severe disorders of consciousness. Cutting edge technologies were discussed as they impact the diagnosis, management and rehabilitation of individuals experiencing traumatic brain injury. Pharmacologic and behavioral management techniques were also presented. CME credit was available for each of the rehabilitation disciplines attending (MD, PT, OT, SLP, SW, Nursing). Those wishing to develop similar Neurorehabilitation Workshops at your Host Institution are encouraged to contact our ASNR Associate Executive Director Shannon Wild shannonwild@llmsi.com.

**Traumatic Brain Injury: The Road to Recovery**
**ASNR Sponsored Workshop Dec 3-4, 1010**
**At Burke Rehabilitation Hospital, White Plains, NY**

**Update on UCNS Neurorehabilitation Certification Process**

Mike Reding, MD

Leadership from ASNR and AAN presented a list of 10 well qualified physicians willing to participate in the UCNS Neurorehabilitation Examination Committee this past month. UCNS has invited those listed to present their CV for consideration by the UCNS Board. Once 10 members have been accepted by UCNS, their Administrative Staff will contact the selected individuals and begin development of an initial Neurorehabilitation Certification Examination. It is anticipated that it will take approximately one year to develop the examination and assess its validity.

Criteria for Neurorehabilitation Fellowship Programs were developed as part of our initial application which was accepted this past year. We have had inquiries from existing Neurorehabilitation Fellowship Programs about when UCNS will begin to accept application submissions. UCNS Neurorehabilitation Application Forms have not yet been developed, and a date for their distribution has not yet been determined. The ASNR Board will be informed when these items are finalized.

**Membership Committee Notes**

**Barbara M. Weissman, MD**

The Membership Committee welcomes the assistance of Richard Bohannon, PT, DPT, EdD, Professor, Department of Physical Therapy, University of Connecticut to assist with membership outreach. The goal of the American Society of Neurorehabilitation (ASNR) is to expand the range of members who join the ASNR. Dr. Bohannon is a highly respected member of the ASNR who recently received distinction at the 2010 meeting by receiving the coveted award, Fellow of the ASNR.

The Membership Committee is also working with the newly formed Liaison Committee to improve the scope of membership as well. We will work together to attract more members to our exceptional organization. The overall goal is increasing membership with diversity backgrounds as noted in the statement made by Krish Sathian, MD, PhD, Professor of Neurology, Rehabilitation Medicine & Psychology, Emory University who is leading the liaison effort. A common interest for all prospective member is an interest in neurorehabilitation science.

As always, the mantra of the Membership Committee is to remind members to please pay their dues!
Assessing the Quality & Applicability of Systematic Reviews using a Systematic Approach

8:00 am to 5:30 pm

Course Director: Marcel P. J. M. Dijkers PhD

Faculty: Tamara Bushnik PhD, Allen Heinemann PhD, Alexander Libin PhD, Mark Sherer PhD

Clinicians, researchers and policy makers, who more and more are forced to rely on systematic reviews because of the ever-increasing professional literature, will finish the course with a better understanding of systematic reviews, and a tool to help them critically evaluate any reviews they may think of applying in their work.

Utilizing a combination of lectures and workgroups, this course will:

- Describe the process of creating systematic reviews.
- Present and review a checklist and accompanying manual to help evaluate the applicability and quality of systematic reviews (including meta-analyses).
- Explain the reasons for various elements.
- Practice using the checklist by evaluating a rehabilitation-relevant systematic reviews.

The course will not deal with the actual translation of systematic review results to practice, other than addressing the questions: is this review applicable to my question, does it address the problem, population, etc. that I deal with.

At conclusion, learners will be able to:

- Describe the importance of systematic reviews in contemporary clinical care, research and program administration.
- Elucidate the steps in a systematic review, and the pitfalls in each step that reviewers and potential users (readers) need to be aware of.
- Explain the nature of the components of the checklist and why they are important elements.
- Use the checklist, applying it to a published systematic review.
NIH R24 Infrastructure Networks: Providing Resources for Rehabilitation Research
8:00 am to 5:30 pm
Course Director: Kenneth J. Ottenbacher PhD, OTR
Faculty: Jonathan Bean MD; Paolo Bonato PhD; Roger Fielding PhD; James E. Graham PhD, DC; Stephen Haley PhD, PT; Alan M. Jette PhD, MPH, PT; Amol Karmarkar PhD, OTR; Chantele Singleton MS
This course provides resources for rehabilitation researchers in two areas: selecting appropriate outcome measures for clinical research and conducting research using large datasets. These topics are presented in a full-day course with two complimentary, but distinct, components. Participants may attend either or both sessions.

The morning session explores opportunities and identifies the skills necessary to conduct outcomes research using large administrative or research databases. At conclusion, learners will be able to:
• Describe the purpose and mission of the NIH 24 Infrastructure Network Program.
• Identify the services available through the R24 Infrastructure Networks/Centers focused on outcome research.
• Learn how to apply for pilot funding, training opportunities, and visiting scientist positions.
• Understand basic issues and challenges in conducting outcome research using secondary analysis of large datasets.

The afternoon session explores optimizing selection of outcome measures in rehabilitation clinical research using a case-based approach. At conclusion, learner will be able to:
• Discuss advances in rehabilitation outcomes measures from three distinct approaches: patient-reported outcomes, performance-based measures, and instrumented outcome measures.

Understand critical considerations in selecting outcome measures: capturing dimensions impacted by the intervention; responsiveness to the effects of the intervention; established validity in the targeted population; and feasibility.

Given real-life clinical research problems presented in case studies, be able to select and justify the appropriate type and combination of outcome measures from the three measurement approaches.

Quality Measures for Rehabilitation: Policy, Provider and Patient Perspectives
8:00 am to 5:30 pm
Course Director: Anne Deutsch RN, PhD, CRRN
Faculty: Helen Burstin MD, MPH; Gerben DeJong PhD; Barbara Gage PhD; Allen W. Heinemann PhD; Kwang-Youn Kim PhD; Holly DeMark Neumann MPP; Kenneth J. Ottenbacher PhD; Suzanne Snyder MBA, PT
The US offers advanced health care services; however, the care is not always accessible, effective, safe, and efficient. In calling for a strong response to improve the quality of health care, the Institute of Medicine noted that the only way to know if health care quality is improving is to document performance using standardized measures of quality.

The course will begin with a review of the key characteristics of a quality measure, including the review criteria (importance, scientific acceptability, usability and feasibility) used by the National Quality Forum. The second segment will include a review of the current status of quality measures from several perspectives. The third segment of the course will focus on data collection and data analysis challenges. This will include presentations focused on several case-mix adjustment approaches, identification of clinically important differences in patient outcomes and challenges in defining adverse events occurring in inpatient rehabilitation programs. The final segment of the course will include a panel of researchers who will discuss possible future policy changes that would affect rehabilitation care and potential research opportunities related to these changes.

At conclusion, learners will be able to:
• Describe the characteristics of a quality measure appropriate for public reporting and pay-for-performance activities.
• Describe the current status of quality measure development
• Describe data analysis challenges when developing quality measures
• Identify future research opportunities associated with quality measurement efforts.

continued on next page
Anticipating Atlanta: Outstanding Plenary Speakers

Anticipation is blossoming for Progress in Rehabilitation Research, the ACRM-ANSR Annual Conference, slated for October 11–15 at the Hyatt Regency Atlanta.

The Program Committee has confirmed two outstanding plenary speakers: David W. Wright, MD and Donald Stein, PhD.

Dr. Wright is the project leader for ProTECT*, a Phase II clinical trial exploring the neuro-protective properties of progesterone on the brain following traumatic brain injury (TBI). He is also assistant professor of emergency medicine and director of Emergency Neurosciences at Emory University School of Medicine.

Dr. Stein is a physiological psychologist, Asa G. Candler professor of emergency medicine at Emory School of Medicine and director of the Brain Research Laboratory at Emory. He is credited with discovering the neuro-protective effects of progesterone, and has since embarked on studies to investigate the use of progesterone in treatment following TBI.

Drs. Wright and Stein have collaborated on studies investigating the helpful effects of progesterone in the aftermath of TBI. Dr. Stein will be lecturing on the science leading up to the ProTECT* studies and Dr. Wright will be speaking about the ProTECT* studies currently being conducted.

Watch www.ACRM.org for more details as they become available.