

UCNS Newsletter

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Sergay Honored for Leadership Contributions

At the UCNS Board of Directors meeting held October 27, 2005, Stephen M. Sergay, MB BCh, received an award for his dedication and commitment to the UCNS process. Sergay recently stepped down as Chair of the UCNS after two years. Leslie A. Morrison, MD, was elected Chair in his place.



Stephen M. Sergay, MB BCh, accepted an award for his service and commitment to the UCNS from newly elected Chair Leslie A. Morrison, MD.

“Dr. Sergay has taken the UCNS from a concept to strengthen subspecialties to a maturing, professional organization that is actively working with numerous groups to create uniform training standards. His personal leadership during these formative years was essential and will ultimately result in the enhancement of subspecialty training, a benefit to both physicians and patients,” said Harvey S. Singer, MD, Secretary/Treasurer of the UCNS. “The UCNS will be forever grateful for his careful supervision—first through the AAN Commission on Subspecialty Certification and since March of 2003 as Chair of the UCNS.”

Sergay was recognized for his achievements at the UCNS Board Meeting in Atlanta, GA, at the Omni Hotel at the CNN Center. Sergay,

who is President-Elect of the AAN, will remain on the UCNS Board as Past Chair. Under Sergay’s leadership, the council has approved five subspecialties for membership—the first step in the UCNS accreditation and certification process. The subspecialties include Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry (June 2004), Clinical Neuromuscular Pathology (February 2005), Headache Medicine (March 2005), Neuro-Oncology (May 2005), and Neuro-Intensive Care (October 2005).

For more information, visit the UCNS Website at www.ucns.org, or contact Mari E. Mellick, CAE, UCNS Director, at mmellick@ucns.org or (651) 695-2719.

UCNS Chair

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Vice Chair

James A. Ferrendelli, MD

Secretary/Treasurer

Harvey S. Singer, MD

Past Chair

Stephen M. Sergay, MB BCh

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Lisa M. DeAngelis, MD

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Kurt Jaeckle, MD

Robert L. Macdonald, MD, PhD

For more information about the UCNS, visit the UCNS Website at www.ucns.org.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the United Council for Neurologic Subspecialties is to provide for accreditation and certification with the goal of enhancing the quality of training for physicians in neurological subspecialties and the quality of patient care.

Important Dates

December 31, 2005

BN & NP Deadline for Accreditation Applications

Early 2006

BN & NP Exam Committee Meeting

January 25 – 26, 2006

Headache Examination Committee Meeting

March 2006 (tentative)

Board of Directors Meeting

April 2006 (tentative)

Accreditation Council Meeting

April 1 – 8, 2006

UCNS Exhibits at the AAN Annual Meeting

Frequently Asked Questions About the UCNS

Q: Why does neurology need to create another organization? Why not have an established neurology organization provide these services?

A: The process of certification in medicine, as in other professional fields, depends on the credibility of the organization issuing certificates. When a certification system is owned by one membership organization, the potential for and perception of a conflict of interest is strong. By establishing an independent organization with all of the major specialty organizations as sponsors, the credibility of the certification and accreditation process is strengthened.

Q: How does a subspecialty begin the UCNS process?

A: The first step in the UCNS process is to achieve subspecialty membership. Upon approval of subspecialty membership, the UCNS would work with the subspecialty to begin the accreditation and certification processes. The UCNS Accreditation Council would begin working with the subspecialty to further define requirements for fellowship programs. Then programs would be able to apply to become accredited by the UCNS. The UCNS Certification Council via its Examination Committee would also work with the subspecialty to assist in developing the examination format and questions that will be used to certify individuals in the subspecialty. A Guide to the UCNS Process is available on the UCNS Website at www.ucns.org/about.

Letter From the Chair

The future of the UCNS has never looked brighter. Thanks to the superb leadership of Dr. Stephen Sergay, the support of our parent organizations, and the hard work of Mari Mellick, we have built a solid base for the future. It is my aim to ensure that moving forward we will maintain the excellence and dedication already put forth.



Leslie A. Morrison, MD

The UCNS has come a long way since being established in 2003. The Council has helped to define training standards for physicians with subspecialty interests and recognize the time spent in acquiring added skills. Several subspecialties have begun the accreditation process, while others are preparing their examinations.

Now that the UCNS is firmly established, the Council will concentrate its efforts on working to establish the UCNS as a credible body among the accreditation and certification communities, as well as collaborating with the parent organizations to seek recognition for UCNS accreditation and certification among governmental agencies, payers, and other organizations.

Reaching out to these groups will help us to extend the reach of the UCNS in both practice and reputation. Ultimately our efforts will lead to the successful fulfillment of the UCNS mission to provide for accreditation and certification with the objective of enhancing the quality of training for physicians in neurological subspecialties and the quality of patient care.

I welcome your feedback in defining the future practice of neurology as we move into this new phase of growth for the UCNS.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leslie A. Morrison MD". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Leslie A. Morrison, MD
Chair, United Council for Neurologic Subspecialties

BOARD MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

UCNS Board Member James A. Ferrendelli, MD, joined the UCNS Board in October 2004 and serves as Vice Chair. Throughout his career, he has been involved in the development of the subspecialties of neuropharmacology and epilepsy. Since 1995, he has served as Professor and Chairman of the Neurology Department, Professor of Pharmacology and the Kraft W. Eidman Professor in the Medical Sciences, at The University of Texas-Houston Health Science Center.

UCNS: Why did you choose to practice medicine and go into the field of neurology?

JF: I grew up in a small town in Colorado and admired the local doctor—I was impressed with the fact that he was respected by all of the members of the community and I wanted to be like him. I was interested in science and biology and chemistry, and I was fascinated by everything I could read about the brain.

UCNS: Where did you train, and where do you now currently practice?

JF: I received my M.D. in 1962 from the University of Colorado. After an internship I served in the military as a Captain in the United States Army Medical Corps from 1963-1965 and completed residencies in neurology and neuropathology and fellowships in neuropharmacology and neurochemistry. I was a member of the medical faculty at Washington University from 1970 to 1995, where I held the positions of Seay Professor of Clinical Neuropharmacology and Professor of Neurology, Pharmacology, Neurological Surgery and Ophthalmology.

UCNS: What was your first reaction to the concept of neurologic subspecialty accreditation and certification?

JF: The concept of neurologic subspecialization has been something I have been interested in promoting from the time I began training. I started the subspecialty of clinical neuropharmacology at Washington University. I started the subspecialty of epilepsy along with others nationally and at Washington University. Once you became accomplished in the area, recognition was necessary not only for yourself

but for the community in general. So my first reaction to the concept was very positive.

UCNS: When did you become involved in the discussions regarding neurologic subspecialty accreditation and certification?

JF: About 20 years ago. I was promoting the idea of clinical neuropharmacology and epilepsy as subspecialties.

UCNS: Why did you become involved with the UCNS, and what is your current role?

JF: When the UCNS became a reality, it was obvious to me that the UCNS was “the only game in town.” This was the only significant effort to promote and develop neurologic subspecialties. I also had great admiration for Dr. Sergay and his enthusiasm and hard-working effort to really bring it to fruition.

UCNS: What has the UCNS’ impact been since it was established in 2003?

JF: First, it has become an accepted entity and many neurologists are beginning to appreciate that there is a mechanism for subspecialization in neurology. The UCNS has made the whole issue of neurologic subspecialization a realistic issue to consider. This has led to greater acceptance of an inevitable development of subspecialty. I think the impact has been great, and it will be greater in the future.

UCNS: What impact do you believe the UCNS will have on the future of neurology?

JF: I think it will change the practice of neurology dramatically. Just like three or four decades ago when individuals decided to take internal



James A. Ferrendelli, MD

medicine subspecialties and develop credentialing certification and training processes. Just as that effort had a great deal of influence and impact on what happened to internal medicine, I think UCNS will similarly have a tremendous impact on developing and defining what neurology is going to be in the present decade and future decades.

UCNS: How will the UCNS process be beneficial to both the generalist and the subspecialist?

JF: Not only will it define subspecialty neurology, it will define general neurology. General neurology is not just everything that’s left over from subspecialty neurology, nor is general neurology a little bit of all subspecialties. I think the UCNS process is going to be beneficial to the general neurologist to define what general neurology is. This is true in internal medicine already. It improves the scope and practice of the generalist as well as that of the specialist.

UCNS: What would you like individuals to know about the UCNS?

JF: It still needs to be better defined. It is still looked upon as a board rather than an advisory organization. We assist in the development of the process of subspecialty certification, credentialing and training—this is the message we need to get across.

Certification Examinations Set for 2006 for Headache Medicine, Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry

The UCNS will hold certification examinations for two subspecialties in 2006.

“It’s exciting to get to this point—where individual physicians can, in a few short months, take the exam to become certified by the UCNS in their subspecialty,” said Leslie A. Morrison, MD, UCNS Chair. “This is a significant milestone.”

The Examination Committees for Headache Medicine and Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry will each meet in early 2006 to select the 200 multiple choice questions that will comprise the examinations for each subspecialty.

The content outlines for the exams are available at www.ucns.org. For the Headache Medicine exam, 10 percent of the questions will focus on epidemiology and comorbidity, 15 percent will focus on anatomy and physiology, 25 percent on headache classification and diagnosis, 20 percent on evaluation and diagnostic testing, and 30 percent on treatment.

For the Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry exam, four content areas will each comprise 25 percent of the questions: structural and functional neuroanatomy; neuropsychiatric assessment; treatments; and neurobehavioral and neuropsychiatric syndromes.

“It’s exciting to get to this point—where individual physicians can, in a few short months, take the exam to become certified by the UCNS in their subspecialty,” said Leslie A. Morrison, MD, UCNS Chair. “This is a significant milestone.”

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The dates for the 2006 exams have not been set. For updates, visit www.ucns.org.

BN & NP Accreditation Applications Due December 31, 2005

The second deadline for applications for accreditation of Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry (BN & NP) fellowship programs is December 31, 2005. Applications submitted before the end of 2005 qualify for the accreditation year beginning July 1, 2006, through June 30, 2007. To apply for accreditation, visit the UCNS Website at www.ucns.org/accreditation. Ten applications were received by the first deadline of July 1, 2005, and reviews have been completed by the UCNS Accreditation Council (AC). The Board of Directors will meet in December to review recommendations from the AC and make final decisions on accreditation.

For more information, visit the UCNS Website at www.ucns.org, or contact Mari E. Mellick, CAE, UCNS Director, at mmellick@ucns.org or (651) 695-2719.

UCNS Approves Neuro-Intensive Care for Membership

A new subspecialty has been approved for membership by the UCNS—Neuro-Intensive Care. The UCNS Board of Directors approved the subspecialty area for membership in October 2005. The Neuro-Intensive Care application was sponsored by the American Academy of Neurology's Critical Care and Emergency Neurology Section, the Neurocritical Care Society, and the Society of Neurosurgical Anesthesia and Critical Care.

Membership is the first step in the UCNS accreditation and certification processes. The UCNS Accreditation Council will now work with the subspecialty on requirements for fellowship programs. Then programs will be able to apply to become accredited by the UCNS. The UCNS Certification Council, via its Examination Committee, will also work with the subspecialty to develop the examination that will be used in certifying individuals. In addition, as a member of the UCNS, the Neuro-Intensive Care subspecialty will be granted one voting seat on the UCNS Board of Directors.

For more information, contact Mari E. Mellick, CAE, UCNS Director, at mmellick@ucns.org or (651) 695-2719.

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The UCNS is sponsored by five parent organizations:

- American Academy of Neurology
www.aan.com
- American Neurological Association
www.aneuora.org
- Association of University Professors of Neurology
www.aupn.org
- Child Neurology Society
www.childneurologysociety.org
- Professors of Child Neurology
see also www.childneurologysociety.org

www.ucns.org

SUBMIT STORY IDEAS

Any news or story ideas for UCNS readers?

We would like to hear from you. Submit feedback regarding this issue and/or story ideas for future issues to the UCNS Executive Office.

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