

UCNS *Newsletter*

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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.

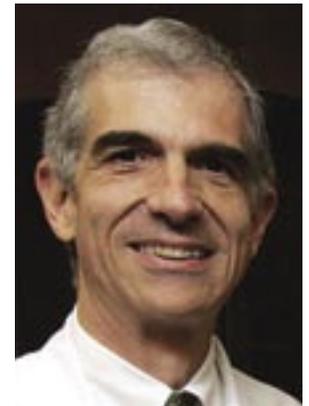
Neuroimaging Joins UCNS as Sixth Subspecialty Member

The UCNS Board approved this summer the membership of Neuroimaging as the sixth UCNS subspecialty. The Neuroimaging application for membership was sponsored by the American Society of Neuroimaging (ASN).

“We are thrilled to have Neuroimaging join the UCNS,” said Leslie Morrison, MD, UCNS Chair. “This marks a significant step toward strengthening the subspecialty of Neuroimaging, as well as strengthening the UCNS.”

“From its inception, the field of Neuroimaging has been developed and cultivated by physicians in the neurological sciences,” said Joseph Masdeu, MD, PhD, who spearheaded the Neuroimaging membership application and is a past president of the ASN and past chair of the American Academy of Neurology Neuroimaging Section. “In the same way that organized radiology recognized in 1992 that the radiology of the nervous system was complex enough to merit a new subspecialty of neuroradiology, organized neurology has now recognized that the practice of neurology requires neurologists with an emphasis on imaging of the nervous system by recognizing the subspecialty of Neuroimaging.”

The Neuroimaging subspecialty is now working with the UCNS on developing the accreditation requirements for fellowship programs as well as the certification examination.



Joseph Masdeu, MD, PhD

Important Dates

November 30 – December 1, 2006

Accreditation Council meeting to review Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry and Headache Medicine accreditation applications for the 2007 academic year

December 31, 2006

Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry and Headache Medicine accreditation applications due for spring review www.ucns.org/accreditation/application

March 9 – 10, 2007

Leadership Planning Retreat with UCNS Board, Accreditation Council, and Certification Council members

April 15, 2007

Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry and Headache Medicine certification applications and payment due to UCNS Executive Office www.ucns.org/certification/applications

April 28 – May 5, 2007

UCNS exhibits at the American Academy of Neurology Annual Meeting in Boston, MA

October 8 – 12, 2007

Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry and Headache Medicine certification examinations

October 2007 (Tentative)

Neuroimaging certification examination

December 2007 (Tentative)

Clinical Neuromuscular Pathology, Neurocritical Care, and Neuro-Oncology certification examinations

Letter from the Chair

The UCNS is growing. In operation for just over three years, the Board has approved our sixth subspecialty, Neuroimaging. We also launched our first examinations, and we met with numerous groups at the American Academy of Neurology (AAN) Annual Meeting that expressed interest in our processes.

Nearly 100 physicians sat for the certification examination in Headache Medicine (HM) in September, along with more than 50 physicians in Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry (BN&NP). Our other four subspecialty memberships are developing their own examinations.

A total of 11 fellowship programs across the country are now accredited in BN&NP, and we are reviewing applications for accreditation from additional BN&NP programs as well as HM programs.

While we celebrate these accomplishments, we also need to look ahead. In March 2007, the UCNS Board will join with the Accreditation Council and Certification Council members for a planning retreat. We will explore recognition of the UCNS and its certificate holders and accredited programs. How do we best convey the value of UCNS certification and accreditation? What does UCNS certification and accreditation mean to hospitals, public and private payers, and others?

We have a growing interest in exploring subspecialty certification for those who hold international neurology certificates. Currently, UCNS certification is available only to those with US or Canadian certificates. We continue to hear from international physicians seeking a process to obtain UCNS certification.

As always, we welcome your thoughts on these topics, as well as suggestions for other areas that you would like us to consider. As we continue to grow and mature, we continue to update and thank our founding parent organizations: the AAN, American Neurological Association, Association of University Professors of Neurology, Professors of Child Neurology, and Child Neurology Society. We remain dedicated to our mission to enhance the quality of training and patient care.



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



Leslie A. Morrison, MD

Six Subspecialties to Hold Certification Exams in 2007

If all goes as planned, six subspecialties will hold UCNS subspecialty certification examinations in late 2007. Four subspecialties are currently working with the UCNS on creating certification examinations. Clinical Neuromuscular Pathology, Neuro-Oncology, Neurocritical Care, and Neuroimaging are developing their exams, with the first exams projected to be held in 2007. Headache Medicine and Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry will hold their second examinations in 2007.

“The experience of taking the Headache Medicine examination in this new subspecialty was thrilling (something most of us don’t feel when sitting for yet another test),” said Alan G. Finkel, MD, who was instrumental in facilitating the Headache Medicine subspecialty membership approval with the UCNS. “The general neurologist would not be able to pass this examination without significant exposure and experience. This is the true mark of subspecialty certification. All during the test I was impressed by the quality of the questions and the range of difficulty. This range gave credence to the mission of the UCNS to include non-neurologists in the pool of candidates and experts.”

Certification applications for the UCNS subspecialty examinations will be due in the spring and summer of 2007. Upon achieving approval to sit for the examination, candidates can choose a nearby Pearson VUE testing center to take the examination.

Application deadlines and examination dates will be posted on the UCNS Website as soon as they are available.

Board Member Highlight

David L. Bachman, MD, joined the UCNS Board of Directors in August 2004. He served as chair of the American Academy of Neurology (AAN) Section on Behavioral Neurology from 2003 to 2005 and is professor of neurosciences at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston. He is director of the Division of Neurology within the Department of Neurosciences. Bachman serves as co-director of the Alzheimer Clinical Research Program and is director of the Clinical Core of the South Carolina Alzheimer Disease Clinical Center.



David L. Bachman, MD

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

DB: I have always been fascinated by higher brain function. Even in college, I was a neurobiology and behavior major. To me, there is nothing more mysterious and fascinating than the human mind, especially when it malfunctions.

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

DB: I was in medical school at Emory University in Atlanta. I also completed two years of residency in Internal Medicine and then a Neurology Residency at Emory. I then fled to Boston where I did a Behavioral Neurology fellowship at the Boston VA. During my time in Boston, I had the invaluable opportunity to learn from such wonderful teachers as Norman Geschwind, Edith Kaplan, Harold Goodglass, Mick Alexander, Nancy Helm-Estabrooks, and Marty Albert. I stayed on faculty at Boston University until 1989. At that time, I joined the faculty of the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston.

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

DB: In the Behavioral Neurology section of the AAN, we have been pushing the idea of accreditation and certification for more than 10 years. This effort was initially led by Jeff Cummings. I believe that an area of subspecialty will never receive the respect it deserves until it demonstrates that subspecialists have been held to a certain standard of achievement.

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

DB: I became involved in these discussions five years or more ago as an officer in the Behavioral Neurology section and in the Society for Behavioral and Cognitive Neurology.

UCNS: Why did you become involved with the UCNS?

DB: In a sense, I was drafted! When Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry was approved by the UCNS, I was president of one of the sponsoring organizations. The

UCNS Bylaws call for board representation from approved subspecialties. For a time, we were the only approved subspecialty.

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

DB: The establishment of the UCNS has been pivotal in a number of ways. It has focused the debate within the neurological subspecialties of the AAN to address the questions of who they are and what they do. It has clearly had an impact on the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, in my opinion, which has only recently demonstrated a greater willingness to consider neurological subspecialties for membership. It has also helped to place a number of neurological subspecialties in a much stronger bargaining position when advocating for their rights to see and bill for certain clinical activities.

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

DB: I think it's much too early to judge the long-term significance of the UCNS. That success will depend on the UCNS continuing to demonstrate credibility in its accrediting and certifying processes. In addition, it will depend on the willingness of its supporting institutions and members to advocate for it.

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

DB: Although the UCNS is primarily positioned to support the specialist, it potentially benefits the generalist as well. Many neurology generalists are fighting to maintain financial solvency in the face of increasing economic pressure. These general neurologists are subsidizing their practice through specialized services, such as reading MRI scans, doing botulinum toxin injections, etc. The UCNS and its participating subspecialties offer the generalist a mechanism

(continued next page)

Fellowship Directors: Apply for Accreditation by December 31, 2006

Program Information Forms for Headache Medicine and Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry programs that wish to apply for UCNS accreditation must be submitted by December 31, 2006. The applications are on the UCNS Website at www.ucns.org/accreditation/application.

UCNS Accredits Additional Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry Programs

Congratulations to the following Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry programs that received accreditation from the UCNS for the 2006 academic year:

| Program | Fellowship Director |
|--|----------------------------|
| Baylor College of Medicine | Paul E. Schulz, MD |
| McLean Hospital | Bruce H. Price, MD |
| University of Colorado School of Medicine | David B. Arciniegas, MD |

These three programs join the following programs with UCNS accreditation in Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry:

- Brigham and Women's Hospital
- Columbia University
- Dartmouth Medical School
- The Johns Hopkins Hospital
- Mayo Clinic College of Medicine (Jacksonville, FL)
- Mayo Clinic (Rochester, MN)
- University of California, San Francisco Memory and Aging Center
- University of Florida College of Medicine

A UCNS Fellowship Directory is now available on the UCNS Website at www.ucns.org.

Board Member Highlight *(continued)*

for obtaining the necessary training and certification to be credible when negotiating with hospitals and third-party payers.

UCNS: What would you like individuals in neurology and the public to know about the UCNS?

DB: I would hope that the neurology community would understand the considerable amount of work that has gone into the creation and the continuing operations of the UCNS. This work is aided by a wonderful, professional staff. However, it's primarily the time and energy of numerous volunteer neurologists that really make the gears turn. I hope that the public and other clinicians will understand that this has been a true grassroots response to the needs of the neurological community. The public will be better served understanding that neurological subspecialists now have a mechanism to demonstrate their expert training and experience.

UCNS

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The UCNS is sponsored by five parent organizations:

- American Academy of Neurology
www.aan.com
- American Neurological Association
www.aneuroa.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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