

2018

Year-End Summary

Mission

Provide accreditation and certification for emerging neurologic subspecialties with the goal of enhancing the quality of training for physicians in neurological subspecialties and the quality of patient care.



2018 Year in Review

Introduction

In 2017, the United Council for Neurologic Subspecialties (UCNS) began a “deep dive” to lay a foundation for data-driven decision making. Since then, the UCNS has engaged its stakeholders to gather their feedback through surveys and listened to the representative voices on the Board of Directors, examination committees, and Councils. Accreditation and certification data are evaluated to make educated projections and identify issues, opportunities, and trends. The “deep dive” has continued in 2018 as we build on this foundation of information to guide the organization through an exciting time of evolution.

With the strong leadership of the Board of Directors, the exceptional oversight of the **Accreditation and Certification** Councils, the subject matter expertise of the examination committees, and the dedication of the UCNS staff, the organization is proud of its accomplishments during the past year and looks forward to an exciting 2019.

Organizational Initiatives & Activities

Raising Awareness of Certification and Subspecialty Career Options

UCNS certification is the standard of expertise for emerging neurologic subspecialties. Promoting the value and credibility of this achievement in certification is now easier with new resources that can be used by UCNS diplomates. Useful tools were created to inform the medical community, referral sources, institutions, and patients about the value of UCNS certification and accreditation. To help educate young physicians interested in pursuing careers in UCNS-recognized neurologic subspecialties, there are now PowerPoint presentations available on the UCNS website that can be used to inform residents about career opportunities, certification, and accredited program options in UCNS-recognized subspecialties. *The UCNS Update*, an electronic newsletter, continues to be distributed monthly to over 4,000 recipients. Increased marketing exposure has been achieved through partnering opportunities with sponsoring and parent organizations through utilization of their communication channels. Participation at the AAN Annual Meeting provides an effective platform to raise awareness in the neurology community by reaching physicians in training, diplomates, and many of the UCNS recognized subspecialties.

Diplomate Survey Reveals Strong Interest in Continuous Certification

A survey was sent to all UCNS diplomates in September to determine estimated diplomate participation in the new Continuous-certification (C-cert) program. Survey results revealed that over 69% of UCNS diplomates already plan to continue their UCNS certification under the C-cert program. Of the total respondents, 26.82% were undecided pending more details about C-cert. The survey also served to gain insight into the potential impact of the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology (ABPN) Neurocritical Care (NCC) certification examination. NCC diplomate respondents indicated a strong interest to continue their UCNS certification (62%) with 36% undecided pending additional details. According to the survey, 25.67% of the NCC diplomate respondents intend to take the ABPN NCC certification examination.

UCNS's Continued Commitment to Neurocritical Care

ABPN announced in June 2018 that it received approval of its application to the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) to offer a certificate in the subspecialty of NCC. The UCNS has administered NCC certification for physicians and accreditation for NCC training programs since 2007. The UCNS has voiced its commitment to the continued support of this multidisciplinary subspecialty, the UCNS-certified NCC diplomates, and NCC-accredited programs. The UCNS offered the 2018 NCC recertification examination and will offer the initial certification examination as scheduled in 2019. NCC diplomates have the opportunity to continue their UCNS certification through the transition to C-cert and UCNS will continue to accredit NCC training programs in the future.

Measuring Progress

Progress towards meeting the priorities set by the Board of Directors are tracked on a scorecard of quantifiable goals. The target goals are based on the numbers used to calculate the approved annual budget and from other benchmarking statics gathered from program annual reports and examination data.

UCNS 2018 Scorecard Ongoing Goals & Outcomes	2017 Yr End	2018 Target	2018 Yr End
Increase number of UCNS accredited training programs.			
Number of new program accreditation applications received	11	9	5
Number of accredited programs*	195	202	201
Available UCNS fellowship spots	298	307	351
Percentage of UCNS fellowships filled	59%	59%	54%
Increase number of UCNS certified diplomates.			
Number of initial certification applications received	298	145	164
Certification Exam Pass Rate (average)	84%	89%	92%
Number of recertification applications received	135	112	128
Retention of eligible recertification candidates	71%	58%	76%
Recertification Exam Pass Rate (average)	98%	98%	94%
Total Diplomates	2823	2894	2885
Meet or exceed budget.			
Net operating surplus (loss)	\$ 140,475	(\$75,079)	\$ 43,741

Fostering Strong Relationships in the Neurology Community

In an ongoing effort to foster strong working relationships between the UCNS, American Academy of Neurology (AAN), and ABPN, representatives of the organizations come together annually for networking and updates. The 2018 meeting took place at the UCNS/AAN offices in Minneapolis, and the 2019 meeting will take place in the Chicago area near the ABPN office on March 19th.

UCNS Welcomes New Board Members

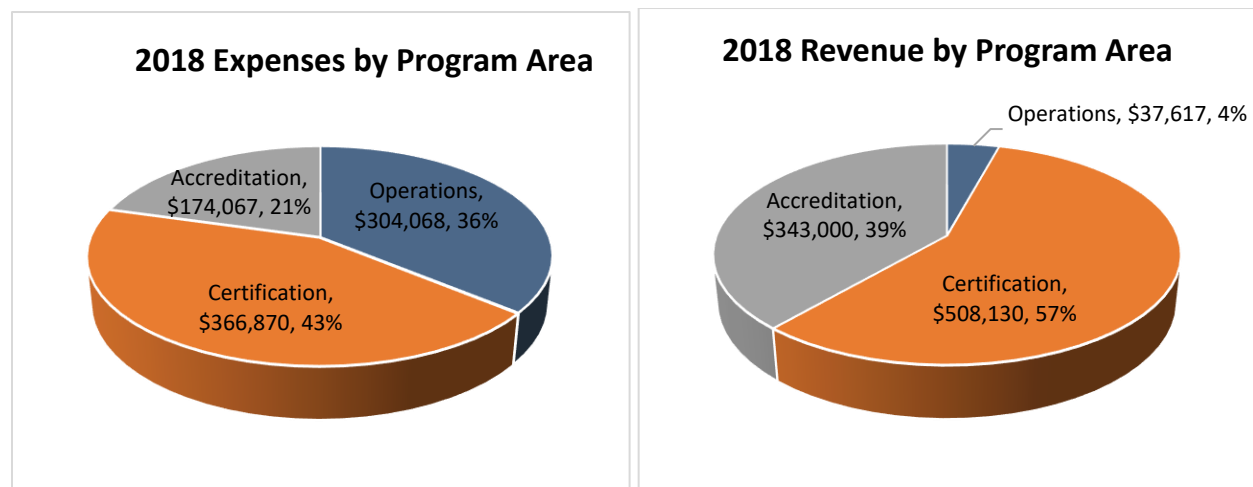
The UCNS welcomed new board members Barbara Schildkrout, MD, and Jaishri Blakeley, MD, and announced the re-election of Paul Fisher, MD, to the Board of Directors. Dr. Schildkrout represents Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry (BNNP) and was nominated by the sponsoring organizations, the Society for Behavioral and Cognitive Neurology and the American Neuropsychiatry Association. Representing Neuro-oncology (NO), Dr. Jaishri Blakeley was nominated by the subspecialty's sponsoring organization, the AAN Neuro-oncology Section. Dr. Fisher represents the Child Neurology Society, one of the five UCNS parent organizations. This is Dr. Fisher's second two-year term serving on the Board.

Board Explores Opportunities and Ideas for Organization Growth in Strategic Planning Session

The UCNS Board of Directors took part in a Strategic Planning Session in conjunction with its October Board meeting. The staff presented the updates for a "data dive" of information relating to certification and accreditation trends. The Board explored ideas for growth including innovative accreditation and certification opportunities which will be further explored in 2019.

Financial Update

Unaudited financial statements for the 12 months ending December 31, 2018, indicate the UCNS will end the year with a net surplus of \$43,741. The positive bottom line can be attributed to better-than-anticipated interest and dividends, higher participant registration for examinations, and under-budget expenses. The anticipated surplus means there was no need to utilize any unrestricted grant funds to balance the budget. The year ended with assets totaling \$1,857,901, which is an increase of \$12,576 from the previous year.



Accreditation

Annual Reports Provide Valuable Data

UCNS-accredited training programs began submitting annual reports in 2017. The reports provide valuable insight into the programs by providing up-to-date information relating to the number of fellowship program spots available and the percentage of fellowship openings that are filled within each subspecialty. This information is summarized for the Board at its strategic planning sessions and will also be shared with each subspecialty and accredited training program directors.

Training Program Milestones Development

Training program milestones continue to be developed for use by UCNS-accredited programs. Modeled with permission after the Accreditation Council for Graduation Medical Education (ACGME) milestones, the UCNS common milestones were developed by the Accreditation Council and approved by the Board of Directors. The Headache Medicine (HM) subspecialty-specific milestones were approved and are being voluntarily piloted by numerous HM training programs. Committees appointed by BNNP, NCC, and NO are working to draft their subspecialty-specific milestones. Following completion of these milestones, UCNS staff will begin working with the remaining subspecialties.

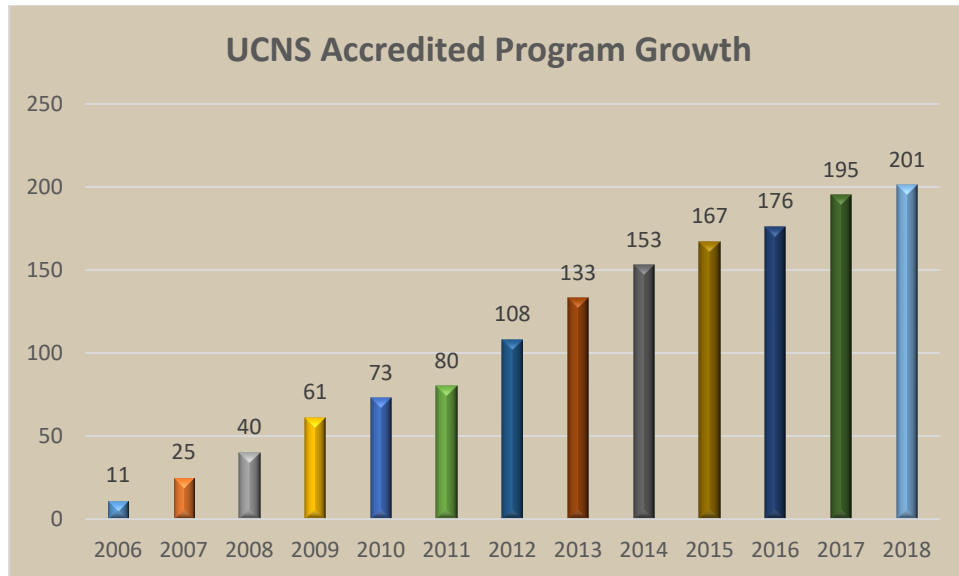
UCNS Simplifies Accreditation Fee Structure

Beginning in September 2018, the UCNS implemented a simplified accreditation fee structure. The Board of Directors voted to revise the annual accreditation fee to absorb the costs associated with reaccreditation. Under the improved fee structure, programs will no longer need to submit a fee with reaccreditation applications. The revised annual fee of \$2,000 is invoiced each May with a July 1 due date.

UCNS Accredited Program Growth

During 2018, UCNS added eight new accredited training programs (BNNP = 1; HM = 3; NCC = 1; NO = 3) and lost two Neural Repair and Rehabilitation accredited programs for a net increase of six programs, bringing the total of UCNS-accredited training programs to 201. A total of six applications were received during the year. The 2017 Training Program Annual Reports revealed that there were 351 fellowship spots available in the first year of UCNS-accredited training programs, with 54% filled.

In 2018 the UCNS used a strategic approach to marketing accredited programs and educating residents about UCNS-accredited training opportunities. The number of accredited programs is only one measure of growth and sustainability for each subspecialty, and the new annual program reporting process provides a gauge of the actual output of fellows who are eligible for future certification.



UCNS-Accredited Training Programs by Subspecialty			
Subspecialty	2016 Training Programs	2017 Training Programs	2018 Training Programs
Neurocritical Care	61	68	69
Headache Medicine	34	39	42
Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry	34	34	35
Neuro-oncology	27	31	34
Clinical Neuromuscular Pathology	6	6	6
Autonomic Disorders	5	5	5
Neuroimaging	5	5	5
Geriatric Neurology	3	5	5
Neural Repair and Rehabilitation	2	2	0
TOTALS	177	195	201

Certification

C-cert Transition Begins in 2019

The Certification Council has met monthly throughout the year as it develops the details for the transition to, and implementation of C-cert. The final high-stakes recertification examinations took place in 2018. With the implementation of C-cert, UCNS certification will be continuous when the annual C-cert requirements are met. Sponsoring organizations and their subspecialty experts will be involved in identifying the topics and information that is relevant to life-long learning for their field and the knowledge assessment will be measured through short annual online quizzes. The full details regarding the C-cert transition and requirements will be announced in early 2019, with the first phase of the transition beginning mid-year in preparation for full implementation in 2020.

UCNS Certification Examinations

Certification and recertification applications came in ahead of budget with a net increase of 62 (2.2%) **diplomates**. UCNS ended the year with 2,885 diplomates. Some subspecialties experienced a net loss of diplomates due to lapsed certifications outpacing the number of new diplomates gained through initial certification. In 2018, recertification examinations were offered in NCC, HM, and BNNP, with an average retention rate of 72% of the diplomates who were due for recertification. Initial certification examinations were offered for HM, BNNP, and AD. All diplomates will begin the transition to C-cert beginning in 2019.

2018 Certification and Recertification Examination Summaries

Subspecialty	Initial Cert Apps Received	Initial Cert Apps Final	Candidates Passed	Pass %	Recert Eligible	Recert Apps Received	Recert Apps Final	Candidates Passed	Pass %
Headache Medicine <i>Initial & Recertification</i>	105	102	92	90%	48	45	45	42	93%
Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry <i>Initial & Recertification</i>	47	47	39	87%	46	31	31	30	97%
Autonomic Disorders <i>Initial certification only</i>	12	11	11	100%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Neurocritical Care <i>Recertification only</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	83	52	52	46	92%
Totals	164	160	142	92%	177	128	128	118	94%

Diplomate Counts by Subspecialty

Subspecialty	2015 Yr End Diplomates	2016 Yr End Diplomates	2017 Yr End Diplomates	2018 Yr End Diplomates
Neurocritical Care*	1,241	1,240	1,374	1,337
Headache Medicine*	520	523	484	570
Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry*	388	403	382	407
Neuro-oncology	207	207	240	236
Clinical Neuromuscular Pathology	43	43	59	59
Autonomic Disorders*	27	38	37	48
Neuroimaging	180	180	206	187
Geriatric Neurology	18	18	18	18
Neural Repair and Rehabilitation	23	23	23	23
TOTALS	2,647	2,675	2,823	2,885
*2018 initial and/or recertification examinations administered				

Certification Policy Change Supports Data-Based Decisions for Practice Tracks

The UCNS Board of Directors approved a change to the certification policies regarding practice track expiration. The new policy assures practice track pathway availability decisions are determined based on a full-spectrum of data relating to certification trends and training program growth. Previously, the policy stated a practice track would close after five years with an option for sponsoring organizations to request extensions not to exceed a total of nine examinations. Over time, data has shown there are better metrics to consider in evaluating practice track closures or extensions to ensure successful subspecialty growth. This policy change will create a uniform, systematic, and timely review of all subspecialty certification outcomes and trends following each examination. In addition, the additional review by the Council will include an overall assessment of fellowship data and how all data provided impact future certification examinations. Based on the data, the Certification Council will make practice track recommendations to the Board providing sufficient time to communicate change prior to each subspecialty's next certification examination.

Looking Forward

The UCNS is looking forward to a new era of C-cert and a more relevant model of life-long learning and knowledge assessment for its diplomates. Training programs will complete their milestones and we will continue to monitor the growth of UCNS-recognized subspecialties. The Board of Directors has set forth priorities for the organization that are progressive and responsive to the needs of practicing physicians in emerging neurologic subspecialties. There are many changes to come and the UCNS will continue to involve its stakeholders as we proceed through the exciting years ahead.

2019 Priorities

- Implement a C-cert model that is relevant to physicians and facilitates life-long learning and timely knowledge assessment
- Engage subspecialty stakeholders in the process of identifying the topics and information needed to continue certification in their area of medicine
- Improve UCNS website presence and user functionality
- Increase awareness of UCNS certification and accreditation opportunities in the non-neurology primary specialties that are included in current subspecialty eligibility criteria

Ongoing Priorities:

- Raise awareness of UNCS certification and accreditation in the neurologic community
- Advocate for recognition of UCNS accreditation and certification in the medical community and at state/federal levels
- Engage new subspecialties in seeking UCNS recognition for strategic growth of their subspecialty and development of quality standards for expertise and training
- Increase the number of UCNS-accredited training programs
- Increase the number of UCNS-certified diplomates
- Meet or exceed the annual budget

2018/2019 UCNS Board of Directors

Parent Organization Directors	Parent Organizations
Chair: Ralph F. Józefowicz, MD University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry	American Academy of Neurology (AAN)
Vice Chair: David J. Fink, MD University of Michigan	Association of University Professors of Neurology (AUPN)
Secretary/Treasurer: Robert J. Baumann, MD University of Kentucky	Professors of Child Neurology (PCN)
Paul G. Fisher, MD, MHS Stanford University Medical Center	Child Neurology Society (CNS)
José Biller, MD Loyola University Stritch School of Medicine	American Neurological Association (ANA)
Subspecialty Voting Member Directors	Sponsoring Organization/Subspecialty
Barbara E. Schildkrout, MD Harvard Medical School	<i>Sponsoring Organizations:</i> American Neuropsychiatric Association Society for Behavioral & Cognitive Neurology <i>Subspecialty:</i> Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry
Michael L. “Luke” James, MD Duke University Medical Center	<i>Sponsoring Organizations:</i> Neurocritical Care Society AAN Critical Care and Emergency Neurology Section <i>Subspecialty:</i> Neurocritical Care
Patrick M. Capone, MD, PhD Winchester Neurological Consultants, Inc.	<i>Sponsoring Organization:</i> American Society of Neuroimaging <i>Subspecialty:</i> Neuroimaging
Barbara J. Snider, MD, PhD Washington University	<i>Sponsoring Organization:</i> AAN Geriatric Neurology Section <i>Subspecialty:</i> Geriatric Neurology

2018/2019 UCNS Board of Directors

Subspecialty Non-Voting Representatives	Sponsoring Organization/Subspecialty
Jaishri O. Blakeley, MD Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine	<i>Sponsoring Organization:</i> AAN Neuro-oncology Section <i>Subspecialty:</i> Neuro-oncology
Noah L. Rosen, MD Northwell Health Zucker School of Medicine	<i>Sponsoring Organizations:</i> AAN Headache Medicine Section American Headache Society <i>Subspecialty:</i> Headache Medicine
Alexander W. Dromerick, MD MedStar National Rehabilitation Hospital	<i>Sponsoring Organizations:</i> American Society of Neural Repair AAN Neural Repair & Rehabilitation Section <i>Subspecialty:</i> Neural Repair & Rehabilitation
Mazen M. Dimachkie, MD University of Kansas Medical Center	<i>Sponsoring Organization:</i> AAN Clinical Neuromuscular Pathology Section <i>Subspecialty:</i> Clinical Neuromuscular Pathology
Paola Sandroni, MD, PhD Mayo Clinic – Rochester	<i>Sponsoring Organizations:</i> American Autonomic Society AAN Autonomic Nervous System Section <i>Subspecialty:</i> Autonomic Disorders
Ex Officio Non-voting Directors and Liaisons	Organization
Steven L. Lewis, MD LeHigh Valley Health Network	American Board of Psychiatry & Neurology
Laurie Gutmann, MD University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine	Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education Neurology Residency Review Committee
Katie Fernstaedt Executive Director Association of University Professors of Neurology	AUPN
Nadine Goldberg, PhD, MS Executive Director American Neurological Association	ANA
Roger Larson Executive Director Child Neurology Society/Professors of Child Neurology	CNS/PCN
Catherine M. Rydell, CAE Executive Director American Academy of Neurology	AAN

UCNS Councils

Certification Council	Parent Organization
Nimish Mohile, MD University of Rochester Medical Center	American Academy of Neurology
Melissa Ko, MD SUNY Upstate Medical University	
Matthew Fink, MD Weill Cornell/New York Presbyterian Hospital	Association of University Professors of Neurology
Alireza Minagar, MD LSU Medical Health Sciences Center	
Bruce Cohen, MD Akron Children's Hospital	Professors of Child Neurology
Howard Goodkin, MD University of Virginia School of Medicine	
Sean Goretzke, MD Saint Louis University School of Medicine	Child Neurology Society
Darren Gitelman, MD Advocate Lutheran General Hospital	American Neurological Association
Jun Li, MD Wayne State University School of Medicine	
Accreditation Council	Parent Organization
Neil Graff-Radford, MD Mayo Clinic Jacksonville	American Academy of Neurology
Holli Horak, MD University of Arizona	
Katherine Peters, MD, PhD Duke University Medical Center	
Angela Shapshak, MD University of Alabama at Birmingham	Association of University Professors of Neurology
Jennifer Kriegler, MD Cleveland Clinic	
James Owens, MD Seattle Children's	Professors of Child Neurology
Christopher Oakley, MD Johns Hopkins Medicine	Child Neurology Society
Eric Sorenson, MD Mayo Clinic Rochester	American Neurological Association
Louis Weimer, MD Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center	

2018 Certification Examination Committees

Autonomic Disorders	Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry
<p>Thomas C. Chelimsky, MD, Chair Paolo Sandroni, MD, PhD, Vice Chair William P. Cheshire, MD Peter Novak, MD, PhD Horacio C. Kaufmann, MD David S. Goldstein, MD, PhD Phillip A. Low, MD Roy L. Freeman, MD</p>	<p>Johnathon M. Silver, MD, Chair Thomas W. McAllister, MD, Vice Chair David B. Arciniegas, MD Colin J. Harrington, MD Miles G. Cunningham, MD, PhD Daniel Kaufer, MD John Hart, JR., MD John J. Campbell, MD Marsel Mesulam, MD C. Alan Anderson, MD</p>
Headache Medicine	Neurocritical Care
<p>Stephen D. Silbersteint, MD, Chair James R. Couch, MD, PhD, Vice Chair Stewart J. Tepper, MD David W. Dodick, MD Alan G. Finkel, MD Christine Lay, MD Deborah I. Friedman, MD Paul Winner, DO</p>	<p>Michael Souter, MD, Chair Javier Provencio, MD, Vice Chair Neeraj Badjatia, MD Perry A. Ball, MD Edward Manno, MD Paul A. Nyquist, MD, MPH Susanne Muehlschlegel, MD, MPH Richard Riker, MD Christos Lazaridis, MD John Terry, MD</p>
NOTE: Examination committee members are subject matter experts nominated by the subspecialty's sponsoring organization(s).	

UCNS Staff

<p>Executive Director Brenda Riggott briggott@ucns.org (612) 928-6106</p>
<p>Senior Manager, Certification Todd Bulson tbulson@ucns.org (612) 928-6067</p>
<p>Senior Manager, Accreditation Amanda Carpenter acarpenter@ucns.org (612) 928-6065</p>
<p>Executive Assistant Becky Swanson bswanson@ucns.org (612) 928-6050</p>