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The World Society for Stereotactic and Functional Neurosurgery

Founded in 1961 as International Society for Research in Stereoecephalotomy

WSSFN Interim Meeting Conference Call January 27, 2010

Present: Takaomi Taira, MD, PhD, Joachim Krauss, MD, PhD, Michael Schuder, MD, Roger Melvill, MD, Graham Fieggen, MD, Sally Roger, MD, Marwan Hariz, MD, PhD and Melody Dian

Regrets: Andres, Lozano, MD, PhD and Jin Woo Chang, MD, PhD

1. Introductions:

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Taira at approximately 7:30 am EST.

2. Aims and Objectives of the Interim Meeting

Dr. Taira suggested that the aim of the interim meeting would be the education of both neurosurgeons (with the potential of neurologists) in Africa. Continued discussion indicated the importance of encouraging stereotactic and functional neurosurgery in countries of South Africa that have little access to the complexities of this technique. It was suggested that the meeting be used to encourage and provide inspiration as well as develop mentors for those who would most benefit from this type of education.

3. Intended Target Audience and Expected Attendance

Although there was some discussion about extending the reach to a more global target audience, it was determined that the focus might be best for a local neurosurgeon audience. This would include South Africa, but could also include the remainder of the African countries as well as the Middle East. A neurologist audience might also be invited. As the target audience is finalized and the marketing plan is developed, Dr. Hariz noted that he has the ability to reach out to both the PanArab Neurosurgical Society and the Societe de Neurochirurgie de langue francaise, two groups that could assist in disseminating the meeting information. Keeping the expectation of attendance modest at approximately 50-70 seemed reasonable, but this depends on the outreach and budgetary decisions.

4. Proposed Date and Venue

After reviewing various dates of major meetings to avoid conflicts, Dr. Melvill and Dr. Fieggen, along with the group, determined that an early November 2011 date would be feasible giving ample planning time. Dr. Taira will be contacting the WFNS to discuss the possibility of linking

their yearly workshop that is scheduled for November 2011 in some way with the WSSFN interim meeting. Perhaps utilizing the speakers that are slated might be beneficial. More information will be available at a later date. Using a university setting might be useful in keeping costs down. However, there may be some additional charges and logistical arrangements needed to get attendees from their lodgings to the meeting site. Dr. Fieggen and Dr. Melvill noted that the venue costs (hotels) are more modest in South Africa compared to other countries.

5. Program

A three day program was discussed. After some consideration, it was suggested that this meeting be more of a workshop format rather than emulating larger Congress's that may focus on scientific paper presentations. Topics could include non-stereotactic surgery for epilepsy, spasticity, dystonia and pain as well as stereotactic lesion surgery for movement disorders, psychiatric illnesses and chronic pain. There was also some mention of having a call for papers, but rather than the focus on new scientific developments or research, have presentations on what is being done in their country for conditions and illnesses relating to the meeting topic. With this in mind, funding for those attending the meeting and presenting their paper might be considered.

6. Invited National and International Speakers

There was no definitive discussion about who to invite to speak. This will unfold as the program is developed. It was suggested that there is an excellent pool of faculty in South Africa who would be part of the faculty. There was a lively discussion on how best to handle the invited speaker costs. Suggestions were made that speaker's total costs be covered as well as suggestions that speakers cover their own costs at least in part. Much depends on fund raising.

7. Budget

WSSFN offered to provide \$30,000 seed money towards the various needs of the meeting. The budget will be developed by the planning committee as they continue their discussion on the program, speakers and venue. The ultimate financial aim is for the meeting to break even. Should there be a profit, suggestions were made to replenish the funds to the WSSFN account, or use the funds to supplement faculty travel, etc, if it is determined that faculty should share in some of the travel costs.

8. Fund Raising (grants, sponsors and exhibitors)

The group will be looking toward a variety of funding possibilities. In-order-to encourage attendance since educational support is not easily attainable for individuals in the potential target audience areas, associations and various companies will be researched to see the viability of their providing grants to assist with attendance fees. If a non-profit status is requested by the association or company (such as the Integra Foundation), AANS will work with WSSFN as the umbrella group, using their non-profit status. Melody can assist with certain logistical processes that will need to be arranged.

9. Other

A conference call will be scheduled in late February to continue the meeting discussions. In the meantime, the interim meeting planning committee will be developing a program based on the input from the group during the call and constructing a potential budget. An appreciative thank you was shared by WSSFN for the efforts of the planning committee who have already met several times to begin the interim meeting development process.

10. Additional WSSFN Business

The officer's remained on the call to discuss the survey that is being developed by Dr. Erick Richter. He is a young neurosurgeon located in Louisiana and very interested in becoming involved in WSSFN activities. Dr. Taira had made some suggestions including a survey that could be sent to resident program

directors relating to the training of residents in stereotactic and functional neurosurgery. Dr. Richter had proposed some questions and asked for input. Also, rather than spending money on purchasing program directors list it was suggested that further research be done to find lists at no costs. Melody will be in contact with AANS to request information relating to program directors and follow-up with Dr. Richter.

The conference call adjourned at approximately 9:00 am EST.