Canadian Neurological Society

Annual Report

May 31, 2019

President: Dr. Fiona Costello
President: Dr. Jodie Burton
Secretary/Treasurer: Dr. Steven Peters

CNS Board Members:

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<th>Dr. Jodie Burton</th>
<th>Dr. Alex Henri-Bhargava</th>
<th>Dr. Steven Peters</th>
<th>Dr. Marsha Eustace</th>
<th>Dr. Colin Chalk</th>
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<td>Dr. Ilia Poliakov</td>
<td>Dr. Reza Vosoughi</td>
<td>Dr. Gerald Pfeffer</td>
<td>Dr. Pari Choudhury</td>
<td>Dr. Adil Harroud</td>
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<td>Mr. Dan Morin</td>
<td>Dr. Alexander Jahangirvand</td>
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CNS: Over-Arching Aims and Responsibilities

The mission statement of the CNS is "To enhance the care of patients with diseases of the nervous system through education, advocacy, and improved methods of diagnostics, treatment, and rehabilitation."

In our quest to serve the needs of Canadian neurologists, the CNS has identified these key pillars of focus:

I. Advocacy
II. Education
III. Leadership (Mentorship)
IV. Annual Congress
By striving to achieve success and a standard of excellence in these pillars, we believe that the CNS will gain increased relevance, and play a more meaningful role in the daily practice of Canadian neurologists. The list of pillars can certainly evolve over time, but since July 2017 these are the domains that we have been most active in, as a society.

**Progress of the CNS Board: Reporting period July 1, 2018 to May 31, 2019:**

The CNS Board convenes by teleconference quarterly, with our last meeting held on April 4, 2019.

**Accomplishments within the reporting period:**

I. **Advocacy**

In follow up to the discussions held at the CNS AGM in June 2018, the CNS voted to endorse the recent bid by the Montreal Neurological Institute (MNI) to host the 2023 World Congress of Neurology in Montreal, (hosted by the World Federation of Neurology). The Montreal site has subsequently been short listed, and Canada is in the running to host this prestigious event. A site visit was held on May 9-10, 2019, which went very well.

More recently the CNS Board was approached by our colleagues affiliated with “Choosing Wisely Canada” to endorse recommendations pertaining to neurological practice. Dr. Philippe Couillard (University of Calgary) has spearheaded this initiative, and has identified five recommendations we have endorsed as a society.

The CNS Board has forged a working alliance with the Canadian Apheresis Group. Dr. Jodie Burton has agreed to be the CNS representative with this group. Dr. Burton has also overseen the CAGs request to solicit interest among our members to join neurological working groups/research initiatives through CAG. An invitation to contact Dr. K Pavenski, CAG’s neurosciences representative, will be in the next Neuro News Letter and Dr. Burton plans to announce this opportunity at CNS Day as well.

The CNS has recently reached out to their membership, and obtained both membership and Board approval in support of a position statement on the treatment of Lyme disease requested by the Association of Medical Microbiology and Infectious Disease (AMMI) Canada.

II. **Education**

The CNS continues to work closely with the Royal College Specialty Committee (Neurology) to promote activities that support resident education, and indeed education at all levels of practice within our membership. Dr. Fiona Costello has continued to work with the Royal College as a member of the RCPS Neurology Sub-Specialty Committee to identify relevant areas of education that can be promoted by the CNS throughout the year, or incorporated into the scientific program at the annual congress. The Specialty Committee has been meeting regularly to develop a CBD design in residency training programs.

Over the two years we have continued to work diligently with Dr. Morris Freedman to promote the “National Neurology Rounds”, a web-based initiative started by the University of Toronto group to telecast quarterly rounds of national interest. Over the past year, these rounds have become televised on an international level, (newly named the “International
Neurology Rounds) with the last update from Dr. Freedman indicating that 14 countries were intending to participate. This level of engagement, spearheaded by Dr. Freedman has prompted a request from the Mexican Academy of Neurology to become affiliated with the CNS. In the 2019 – 2020 year, we hope as a society to expand our international network of affiliated societies committed to education in the field of neurology.

III. Leadership/Mentorship

The CNS aims to promote homegrown accomplishments by Canadian neurologists in research, education, and leadership. We have launched our inaugural “Canadian Leaders” segment with our first article published in the CJNS, and highlighted in the newsletter. In this paper, Dr. Adil Harroud interviewed Dr. Jack Antel from McGill University. In the second installment of the series, Dr. Parichita Choudhury interviewed Dr. Luanne Metz (University of Calgary). Our resident representatives have indicated that the Canadian Leaders segment is quite popular with residents and further “partnership” interviews between residents and Canadian leaders are pending. The next interview is currently being planned.

IV. Annual Congress

The CNS Board has worked closely with the SPC to help develop the scientific program for the 2019 congress. Our confirmed Richardson Lecturer for 2019 is Dr. David Dodick from the Mayo Clinic. One half of the CNS day will include a course focused on headache to be co-chaired by Dr. Suzanne Christie and Dr. Paul Cooper. It is anticipated that Dr. Dodick will also participate in this aspect of the program.

The CNS has also been approached by the Europe Charcot Foundation to host their inaugural Charcot Lecture in the Annual Congress. We hope this new feature will attract more Canadian neurologists committed to the care of CNS inflammatory disorders to attend the meeting. Dr. Kazuo Fujihara has been selected as the first Charcot Lecturer, and in honour of this inaugural event, Dr. Mark Freedman will chair a half-day session in the topic of multiple sclerosis and related disorders as part of CNS Day. Dr. Freedman has been a strong advocate for the CNS and the CNSF as a whole. To further “fortify” congress attendance, Dr. Freedman has scheduled a national meeting of MS specialists to be held at the same venue as the annual congress on June 15, 2019. We hope to be able to entice some of these neurologists to extend their stay in Montreal and attend the meeting. This has been facilitated by timely advertisement of the meeting, and promotion of the Charcot Lecture.

Dr. Alex Henri-Bhargava has been in contact with Dr. Gregg Day of Washington University at St. Louis regarding the possibility of establishing a scholarship for a student to attend the Annual Congress, supported by the NMDA Receptor Encephalitis Foundation. The CNS Board supported this scholarship in concept. Dr. Alex Henri-Bhargava has contacted Dr. Day to establish preliminary terms of reference for this scholarship for further review by the CNS Board. The plan at this point is for the NMDA Receptor Encephalitis Foundation to fund a student to attend the annual congress, and the prize-winning abstracts (Dr. Aravind Ganesh and Dr. Dhruv Jain) will be highlighted at the Congress. We view this collaboration with this NMDA Receptor Encephalitis Foundation as an opportunity to ‘grow” the meeting, and attract international membership.
The winner of the Francis McNaughton Memorial Prize is Dr. Adil Harroud. The winner of the Andre Barbeau Memorial Prize is Dr. Vincent Picher-Martel. Both award winners will be honoured at the Annual Congress.

Resource Needs:

a. **Newsletter**: The CNS will continue to promote relevant information to our membership through the newsletter. We are grateful for the efforts of Ms. Donna Irvin in ensuring that our updates are published.

b. **Website**: We need to update the current website to reflect the leadership in the CNS, contact information, and pillars of focus. We need to use the website as a means of interacting with our membership, and maintaining relevance above and beyond the annual congress.

c. **Engagement**: The CNS has made significant strides to enhance engagement by partnering with other organizations. We hope that by fortifying our alliances in a synergistic model, we will attract more CNS members over time. By doing so, we will have more to offer as a society, by increasing our depth of involvement with these focused groups. They bring with them their own members, and international profile; our collaborations with these groups will in turn augment the profile and relevance of the CNS to a much larger neurological audience.

d. **Membership**: The federated model of the CNSF has potentially left the survival of the CNS in a somewhat precarious position. Our base is fragmented, partly because we have separate societies for our pediatric and electrophysiology colleagues. We need to emphasize the need for all neurologists to contribute to the future growth and direction of the CNS, regardless of their sub-specialty and society alliances. We also need to devise novel and innovative methods of promoting both diversity and unity within our ranks. The CNS Board would respectfully encourage ALL CNS members to support our society, and participate in the 2019 AGM either in person, or through a proxy. By “leading from the front” and supporting our society, they will have an important impact in encouraging membership in the CNS and the CNSF as a whole. We hope to provide updates regarding strategies we will employ to enhance membership in the months to come.

One possible effort to improve CNS membership may involve reaching out to the provincial society Neurology representatives who have better access to neurologists in the community. We will discuss if the individual CNS provincial representatives are best suited to this task.