1) Scientific Program

The scientific program for the 2016 CNSF Congress has now been finalized.

On the CNSF website, the entire program can be viewed at-a-glance (http://congress.cnsfederation.org/uploads/content/general/documents/2016-program-at-a-glance.pdf). Visitors to the site can also access detailed content information for each day of the Congress via separate links.

Below are key highlights of the program, with novel additions to the Congress in bold:

1. On Tuesday, the Congress will open with Hot Topics, one parallel session per member society
   a. Innovation: CNS and CNSS have finalized a joint session on Physician-Assisted Death (PAD). The CNSS will also be presenting a position statement on PAD.
2. Resident review courses for Neurology and Neurosurgery have been finalized for Tuesday, June 21
   a. Neurology: full-day course split between Neurophysiology/EEG and Neuromuscular/EMG
   b. Neurosurgery: half-day course on Neurovascular (with participation by our Penfield lecturer)
3. New concurrent Tuesday afternoon courses geared at non-resident attendees have been finalized; they include Functional Mapping in Cranial Surgery (CNSS) and Conducting Independent Medical Exams (CNS)
4. Newly branded Clinical Case Studies (CCS) will be held on Tuesday evening
5. Wednesday morning Grand Plenary speakers have been finalized
6. Chair’s Select Abstracts have been finalized for Wednesday late morning, and will include prize-winning abstracts from each Society
7. Wednesday afternoon will include 5 multidisciplinary courses, including a novel Tumor-related Epilepsy course
8. The Residents’ Social event is planned for Wednesday evening
9. Thursday remains “Society Day”, with each member society responsible for generating its own specific content:
   a. CACN: Rare diseases (with participation by our Tibbles lecturer)
   b. CNS: Neuromyelitis Optica and MS
   c. CSCN: Neuromuscular and EEG in the ICU setting
   d. CNSS: Two streams of parallel content, including Pediatric Neurosurgery, Spine, and Radiosurgery courses, and a novel Innovations in Neuroscience Education course
10. Digital poster sessions will proceed on Thursday late afternoon. A 9th poster session has been added in order to accommodate the significant increase in total posters accepted this year
11. The CNSF Social Event “A Taste of Quebec” is planned for Thursday evening at the Chateau Frontenac
12. Friday morning will include 3 multidisciplinary courses: Hydrocephalus, and novel courses in Disorders of Consciousness and Tropical Neurology/Neuro-infectious Diseases
13. Platform oral presentations will run concurrent to #10
14. Grand Rounds will conclude the Congress as per tradition on Friday afternoon
15. There will be a total of 5 unaccredited, industry-sponsored Lunch ’n Learn sessions (2 each on Tuesday, June 21 and Wednesday, June 22, and 1 on Thursday, June 23)
16. Overall, there was a significant increase in the total number of abstracts submitted to the Congress (244 in 2016 versus 186 in 2015). In total, 192 abstracts were accepted (54 oral presentations, 138 posters).

2) SPC “Retreat” at 2016 CNSF Congress and Future Congress Planning

Traditionally, the content of the annual Congress has largely been determined by the Executives of the SPC and Program Development Committee (PDC), informed by input from Society Executives on an ad hoc basis (and under CNSF Board oversight). Over the past year, the SPC executive has made a concerted effort to encourage greater involvement of the larger SPC membership in the Congress planning process. To date, this initiative has proved successful, with several novel additions to the Congress program having emerged as a result.

To further foster SPC engagement in planning the 2017 Congress, and in order to continue fuelling innovative additions to Congress structure and content, the SPC is planning a retreat for its members (including the PDC executive) that will take place during the 2016 Congress. As opposed to a rigidly structured meeting, this retreat is meant to be primarily a brainstorming session in which any and all ideas will be welcomed. At present, the SPC executive is in the process of identifying key issues for discussion during the retreat. Examples of these issues include:

- The adequacy of the current abstract review process
- The challenge of maintaining the scientific standards of the Congress, while avoiding the potentially adverse effects of abstract rejection on Congress attendance
- Deciding where scientific content should fit into the overall Congress schedule (i.e., could it be interspersed into traditional didactic/educational sessions?)
- Determining the viability of implementing a rotating curriculum of core Congress content which is repeated on a cyclical basis

We would anticipate that ideas emerging from the retreat will be circulated to the CNSF Board for approval during the summer of 2016.

3) Outlook

The SPC anticipates a successful 2016 CNSF Congress that will be well-received by the CNSF membership. We are optimistic about the potential for the Congress—through a strong commitment of the SPC to innovation—to remain relevant in an era of ever-increasing conference options for Canadian neuroscience clinicians.

Respectfully Submitted,

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CNSF Scientific Program Committee Chair