Message from the Chairman

2019 marks a time of transition for the American Association of Pediatric Section on Neurological Surgery (SONS). Dr. Phil Aldana takes on the role of Immediate-Past Chair, after leading SONS for the past 3 years. Phil codified and organized SONS such that we have strong footing now to move forward with a renewed purpose and function.

The Executive Committee also says a warm good-bye to Tina Duhaime FAAP and Doug Brockmeyer FAAP, and thanks them for their years of service to SONS. At the same time we welcome our new Executive Committee members, Jonathan Martin and David Bauer, elected as at-large members. Drs. Martin and Bauer will lead our Education and Policy & Advocacy Subcommittees, respectively. Greg Albert FAAP and Sandi Lam FAAP will serve in their new roles as Vice-Chair and Secretary, respectively.

Moving forward, I would like to challenge SONS to “dare greatly!”

This phrase was taken from Teddy Roosevelt’s quote, which I would like to share:

We articulate a bold vision: AAP SONS will distinguish itself in organized pediatric neurosurgery with an outward focus on children’s health advocacy; national outcomes and benchmarking; education of patients, families, and pediatricians; and health services research.

To deliver this vision:

1. We seek to have a louder voice in the AAP & AANS/CNS Washington Offices by establishing a direct liaison.

2. In conjunction with the AAP initiative to develop the Child Health Improvement through Longitudinal Data (CHILD) registry, one of the main aims of SONS is to initiate a national pediatric neurosurgery database which would add value for our members in terms of benchmarking, research, and education.

3. By showing value to SONS membership, we aim to increase our membership by 3-fold over the next two years.

It is an exciting time to be part of SONS. If you have any questions about new membership, or how to get involved with our projects and initiatives, please feel free to reach out to me (ajea@iuhealth.org) or one of our Executive Committee members.

Sincerely,

Andrew Jea FAAP
Chair, Executive Committee
Membership

Congratulations to our new SONS members! Membership will provide you with unparalleled access to resources allowing you to impact the patients and families you serve! We value members at all levels of training (medical students, residents, fellows, and attending providers). Together, we can shape the future of pediatric neurosurgical care.

Alexandria Anderson  
Elizabeth Armenis  
Karl Balsara  
Alexandra Beier  
Maralee Bisons  
Marie Chen

David Chesler  
Jason Hauptman  
Ashton Jackson  
Shrayash Khare  
Srilaxmi Kishor  
Sarah Kleinknecht

Denise Le  
Ana Martinez  
Narayanan Nair  
Jeffrey Raskin  
Vijay Ravindra

Helly Shah  
Rawan Sultan  
Krystal Tomei  
Yashira Torres  
Andrew Wang

We would also like to thank our renewing members- your commitment to SONS is essential to the success of our organization!

James Baumgartner  
Samuel Browd  
Toba Niazi  
Peter Ruzicka  
Howard Weiner

Annual meetings

AAP National Conference and Exhibition, New Orleans, LA October 2019

SONS was well represented at the most recent American Academy of Pediatrics. Members joined 10,000 pediatricians and health care professionals in New Orleans to exchange ideas related to children’s health. The AAP counts among its 69,000 members general pediatricians and subspecialists in nearly every discipline, presenting opportunities to network and collaborate with non-neurosurgical pediatric colleagues.

➢ Dr. Eylem Ocal presented a talk at the plenary session titled “Heads Up: When to Refer for Abnormal Head Size and Shape”.

➢ Dr. Brandon Rocque made a joint presentation with Dr. Laura Hayes titled “The MRI Showed What? Common Findings on Neuroimaging”.

➢ Dr. Phil Aldana joined colleagues in surgery, anesthesiology, orthopedics, and radiology for a session on global child health care, where this diverse group of experts shared their perspective on the provision of surgical care in an austere mission environment.

➢ Dr. Jonathan Martin joined colleagues in Emergency Medicine and Surgery for a joint program focused on the prevention of gun violence in children. His presentation was titled “Keep to the middle: context for building a broader coalition for advocacy to reduce pediatric firearm injuries”.

AANS/CNS Pediatric Section Meeting, Phoenix, AZ, December 2019

SONS speaker

SONS sponsors an annual lectureship with the goal to educate pediatric neurosurgeons on important current medical topics that affect the health of pediatric neurosurgical patients.

Dr. Michael Berens spoke on advances in molecular measurement technologies and the value-proposition of liquid biopsies for pediatric brain tumor care in his talk “Promise and Perils of Liquid Biopsy in Pediatric Brain Tumor Care”.

Continued on Page 3
His talk highlighting advances in molecular measurement technologies and the value-proposition of liquid biopsies for pediatric brain tumor care exemplify the mission of SONs and the AAP.

SONS Award

The AAP/SONS Award at the Scottsdale meeting was presented to Aaron Yengo-Kahn, MD, a neurosurgery resident at Vanderbilt University, for his talk entitled “Improving Discharge Readiness after a Concussion Diagnosis in the Pediatric Emergency Department.” For his efforts standardize discharge instructions for ER concussion patients, Dr. Kahn will receive a complimentary one-year AAP membership and a monetary award. Congratulations!

55. Improving Discharge Readiness After A Concussion Diagnosis In The Pediatric Emergency Department

Authors: Aaron Michael Yengo-Kahn, MD; Nishit Mummareddy, MD; Michael Bezzedens, BA; Adam Vukovic; Cody Pennod, MD; Stephen Gannon, CCIP; Christopher Bonfield, MD; E. Haley Vance (Nashville, TN)

Introduction:
Over 1 million annual Pediatric Emergency Department (PED) visits are related to traumatic brain injuries, the majority of which are concussions. Many patients are discharged without complete concussion-specific follow-up and/or discharge instructions, representing a major challenge. Therefore, we implemented an education intervention along with a discharge template for providers and patients, to improve rates of referral and discharge instruction dissemination.

Methods:
From July 2016 to December 2018, 769 medical records of children diagnosed with concussion in the emergency department were identified using billing codes (ICD-10). Children with positive head CT scans or requiring admission were excluded. Implementation of a consensus-guideline based discharge instruction template and dedicated provider education sessions (peer to peer, PED resident/fellow education conference teaching) were completed in October 2017. The presence of discharge instructions including those for return-to-play (RTP), return-to-learn (RTL), follow-up referral to our institution, and documentation of a follow-up visit were recorded both prior to and following implementation. Chi-square tests were used to compare pre- and post-intervention discharge success.

Results:
Of the 769 (402 pre-intervention, 367 post-intervention) concussed patients in the PED, the majority (58%) were non-sport-related. Compared to before our intervention, a significantly greater proportion of patients received instructions for RTP (84.4% vs 51.8%, X²(1)=77.79, p=0.001), RTL (54.9% vs 6.2%, X²(1)=128.37, p=0.001) and were referred to a follow-up visit within our institution (51.7% vs 28%, X²(1)=153.4, p<0.001) after the intervention. However, there was no change in the proportion of patients who completed the follow-up visit.

Conclusion:
Ensuring follow-up and providing adequate discharge instructions remains a challenge even in large pediatric medical centers. However, a simple, low-cost intervention such as peer-to-peer education and consensus-guideline based discharge instruction templates can improve discharge readiness after concussion. Further work is needed to increase the proportion of patients completing follow-up visits with providers trained in concussion management.

AAP/SONS Award; Kenneth Shultman Award
SONS Policy and Advocacy Committee

SONS thanks Dr. Sandi Lam for her leadership on Advocacy for the past 3 years, and welcomes Dr. David Bauer who will lead the committee over the next 2 years. Dr Bauer can be reached at dfbauer@mac.com

The Policy and Advocacy Committee had a busy year on behalf of SONS membership. Actions taken by the committee include:

Reviewed and provided feedback on behalf of AAP-SONS:

- CMS request for information on the topics of “Reducing Administrative Burden to put Patients over Paperwork
- Section on Plastic Surgery “Pediatric Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery for Primary Care” chapter on Craniosynostosis
- Reviewed the revised clinical reports “Long-Term Follow-Up Care for Pediatric Cancer Survivors” for the Section on Hematology Oncology
- Working with the AAP on the ICD-10-CM Coordination and Maintenance Committee proposed code changes for traumatic brain herniation

Engaged in cross-platform discussions on the need for advocacy and policy activities:

- From ASPN survey on advocacy/policy, all groups recommended to work together and support collective efforts together
- Topics of suggested priority include transition of care, injury/firearm prevention and safety, among others

Representative in advocacy in gun safety:

- Dr. Jonathan Martin presenting in multiple forums with pediatric colleagues on gun violence and safety

Development of *Choosing Wisely*: Pediatric Neurosurgery for AAP (pending approval by all AAP subspecialty committees):

- *Choosing Wisely* is an initiative of the ABIM Foundation that promotes patient-physician conversations about unnecessary medical tests and procedures.
- Mission of Choosing Wisely is to promote conversations between clinicians and patients by helping patients choose care that is:

Continued on Page 5
SONS Policy and Advocacy Committee  Continued from Page 4

- Supported by evidence
- Not duplicative of other tests or procedures already received
- Free from harm
- Truly necessary

SONS Choosing Wisely Topics

1. Don't perform routine imaging for evaluation of infant head shape.
2. Don't obtain imaging of the cervical spine following trauma in an awake and alert patient without considering the use of clinical decision making (CDM) tools for cervical spine clearance.
3. Don't perform routine imaging or routine elective procedures requiring sedation or general anesthesia for very young children with low-risk asymptomatic lesions.
4. Don't perform routine imaging for evaluation of VP shunt function in a patient without signs or symptoms of shunt malfunction.
5. Don't routinely obtain a CT or MRI scan for developmentally normal, clinically asymptomatic infants with macrocephaly.

SONS Education, Newsletter, and Publication committee

SONS thanks Dr. Greg Albert for his leadership for the past 3 years, and welcomes Dr. Jonathan Martin who will lead the committee over the next 2 years. Dr Martin can be reached at jmartin03@connecticutchildrens.org

In addition to coordination of presentations at the AAP 2019 National Conference and Exhibition, as well as the SONS speaker and SONS award at the 2019 AANS/CNS Pediatric Section meeting, the education, newsletter, and publication committee had two presentations accepted for the 2020 AAP National Conference and Exhibition in San Diego, and facilitated publication of a July 2019 review by Dr. Jeffery Raskin in AAP News titled: ‘Minimally Invasive Brain Surgery for Children Increasingly Safe, Effective’.

In 2020, the committee plans to update the SONS Website and centralize efforts by membership to educate pediatricians on neurosurgical issues. Stay tuned!
AAP Section on Neurological Surgery Executive Committee

Chairperson: Andrew Jea, MD, FAAP

Ex-Officio: Phillip Aldana, MD, FAAP

Executive Committee Members:
- Gregory Albert, MD, FAAP
- David Bauer, MD, FAAP
- Sandi Lam, MD, FAAP
- Jonathan Martin, MD, FAAP

Jen Gorlewski, MHA Manager, AAP Committees and Sections
American Academy of Pediatrics • 345 Park Blvd, Itasca, IL 60143 • 630-626-6789

Mark A. Krajecki Journal Production Specialist