

Technical Advances in Neurosurgery 2015



New EANS President Andre Grotenhuis discusses technical advances in neurosurgery, the role of the EANS, and why sports are important!

The theme of EANS2015, our recent Annual Meeting in Madrid, was “Technical Advances in Neurosurgery” and it is undeniable that the specialty is evolving extremely rapidly.

To name but a few of these advances:

1. functional preservation in glioma surgery using awake craniotomy and intraoperative neurophysiology monitoring
2. increased use of less traumatic approaches to deep-seated lesions inside the brain with the help of endoscopes, navigation techniques and even robotics
3. increased technical possibilities to treat neurovascular disease, e.g. flow diverters for complex aneurysms, and thrombus retrievers for the treatment of stroke.

Besides these purely technical advances we have seen improved outcomes as a result of the critical evaluation of clinical interventions and the use of evidence-based guidelines, both in neurotrauma and in functional neurosurgery.

With progress at its current exponential rate, the EANS perceives one of the key elements of its stated mission—to act as the primary advocate for neurosurgery, neurosurgeons, and their patients in Europe and beyond—as the provision of a platform which facilitates exchange of scientific information among clinicians and scientists at all stages of their neurosurgical careers.

We recognize that this demands a multi-faceted approach, whereby traditional congresses are complemented by online learning opportunities. We find that the two sit comfortably together; all lectures delivered during the Madrid plenary sessions are available to view online via our online learning

portal, the EANS Academy <http://academy.eans.org>, yet the onsite participant numbers for EANS2015 far exceeded our expectations and attendance at previous events.

We believe strongly in the concept of mentorship, and offer numerous opportunities for young neurosurgeons in training to get to know the “experts,” not just as listeners within a traditional lecture format, but, wherever possible, as equals.

The European Training Courses in Neurosurgery, for some time the flagship events of the EANS, are invariably hugely oversubscribed—not just as a result of their acknowledged scientific quality, but also because they offer an unrivalled opportunity for neurosurgeons in training to get to know both their peers in other countries and some of the most eminent international faculty, in a relaxed and informal context.

Networking is a key part of these residential events, with participants and faculty housed under a single roof. To give an example: early in the event, a sports evening is arranged where teams of participants compete both against each other and against faculty members. The tournaments are invariably hotly contested and memorable, but they also serve a more important role; throughout the week,





trainees will participate in multiple interactive sessions within these same “teams,” and their engagement and contributions to discussion are demonstrably higher after the “ice breaking” sports evening.

We are delighted that our sound financial situation allows us to offer an increasing range of observership and fellowship opportunities, funded both internally and through the generosity of industry sponsors. These are available not only to those within Europe, but also to our fast-growing international membership. EANS2015 featured several “Meet the Expert” sessions, where eight participants, selected purely on a “first come, first served” basis, enjoyed in-depth scientific case discussion with three world experts in subspecialist disciplines. Our hope is that delegates will not simply go home with improved clinical knowledge to implement in their daily practice, but that some may also forge long-lasting relationships of mutual benefit to mentor and mentee.

One of our most important achievements in recent years has been the development of the EANS Academy, the online learning resource mentioned earlier. Comprehensive



material from our congresses, training courses, and increasing range of other subspecialist events can be filtered by keyword, subspecialist topic, speaker/author, or event, and we also offer the “Talks on the Go” App which enables viewers to download and watch material while offline.

While a significant proportion of material is available to all those involved in the field of medicine—browse through for yourself at <http://academy.eans.org>—it is by joining the EANS as an individual member that you will unlock full, free access to the wealth of available material. Membership isn’t just confined to neurosurgeons; we also offer Associated Specialty membership from only €75 per year to those of you working in related medical fields. Have a look at our website www.eans.org to learn more about our association, activities, and other membership benefits, and to apply for individual membership—the online application process is swift and straightforward.

We are constantly striving to improve the services and benefits that we offer our constituency and welcome feedback from members and nonmembers alike; please write to us at info@eans.org.