

TSRA Executive Committee Minutes

Semiannual Meeting at the Society of Thoracic Surgeons

Date: January 30, 2011

Call to order: 4:34PM PST.

Present:

George Hicks (President, TSDA), David Fullerton (President-Elect, TSDA), William Baumgartner (Executive Director, ABTS), Beth Winer (Affiliate & Marketing Manager, TSDA)

Executive Committee Members: Shamus Carr, Lucas Duvall, Robroy MacIver, Jenifer Marks, Stephen McKellar, Carlos Mery, Tom Nguyen, Ramesh Singh, Bryan Whitson, Jason Williams

Education Committee Members: Jeremiah Martin, Stephanie Mick, Theolyn Price

Communications Committee Members: Daniela Molena, Samuel Youseff

Absent: Joe Turek, John Lin (Education), Daniel DiBardino (Communications), Amit Arora (Communications)

Officers:

President – Carlos Mery

Vice President – Shamus Carr

Secretary – Jason Williams

Moderator: Carlos Mery

Discussion

1. Approval of minutes for TSRA Executive Committee Conference Call from August 15, 2010 and Communications Committee Conference Call from December 5, 2010.
2. Introductions – each member present introduced themselves and their institution prior to beginning formal discussions of TSRA business.
3. Dr William Baumgartner, Executive Director of the American Board of Thoracic Surgery
 - a. Index cases
 - i. It is the responsibility of the resident and the program director to ensure index cases are being met by the end of training.
 - ii. Eight residents last year were significantly deficient in certain areas and were not allowed to sit for their qualifying examinations.
 - iii. If there are questions or concerns about this, the resident should try to voice these concerns early in their final year of training to help prevent these problems at the end of the year.

- iv. Dr. Baumgartner and Dr. Wood (of the RRC) are always available to help residents with these or any other issues that might arise during training, and residents should not hesitate to contact them if they have issues or concerns.
- b. Case Coding System
 - i. On July 1, 2011, the system will change from the CTSNet system currently being used to the ACGME system that is currently used to log cases during general surgery residency. This is a CPT code based system and should enhance case tracking.
 - ii. Current residents will continue to use the CTSnet system, but all new residents as of July 1st will start using the ACGME system
- c. SESATS 7 & 8
 - i. SESATS 7 & 8 are now available for free as an i-Phone application.
 - ii. Dr Ed Bender was instrumental in helping to create this new app.
 - iii. SESATS 9 is currently being used for the maintenance of certification examination, but will be added to the free i-Phone app once SESATS 10 comes on-line and is used for the examination.
 - iv. The pass rate for the maintenance of certification examination was 95% this past year.
 - v. The pass rate for the qualifying examination (written boards) was only 70%, and the pass rate for the certifying examination (oral boards) was even less. The TSDA curriculum will be the basis for these exams, so studying these weekly curriculum items should prepare residents well for these examinations.
- 4. Schedule of events for the STS Annual Meeting – Carlos Mery briefly discussed the TSRA related activities for the STS annual meeting, including the executive committee meeting, the TSRA luncheon, and the STS Residents Luncheon
- 5. Education Committee Update
 - a. Elite Cardiothoracic Surgery Training Program Survey
 - i. Stephanie Mick presented the preliminary data from this survey
 - ii. Dr. Hicks had a number of comments and concerns regarding this survey
 - 1. The definition of an elite program is somewhat unclear and it would be nice to have a better way to define it. Furthermore, he questioned how a program earns a great reputation and who determines this.
 - 2. There is a disparity in some of the findings, specifically that education is not always the highest priority for residents to consider a program elite.
 - 3. There is a selection bias in determining which programs get the most votes, specifically that programs with larger numbers of residents who actually fill out the survey will probably score higher nationally.
 - 4. What we care about is not which programs are elite, but making the average or below average programs better so that all trainees receive exceptional training.
 - 5. This survey may not completely illuminate the way to do this, but it is a good start in providing all programs with a roadmap that they can use to become better. Furthermore, this survey

may help to identify the discrepancies between resident and faculty opinions on these issues.

b. JCTSE Meeting Update

- i. Lucas Duvall updated the group about the most recent JCTSE meeting, where the main topic of discussion revolved around our specialty needing to evolve and change the paradigm with which we train and educate residents
- ii. Three main topics were discussed at this meeting
 1. The JCTSE would like to develop computer and web based learning modules which are case based and similar to what is being used in Europe, although one concern is who will control the content of these modules.
 2. Simulation training is also a key component to the new paradigm given the work hours restrictions. This would provide basic skills prior to entering the OR so time in the OR can be maximized. One question moving forward is should simulators be used as part of the Board Certification process?
 3. The third issue was the manner and timing of feedback for trainees. The JCTSE discussed the balance needed between immediate and delayed feedback and debated the frequency with which feedback should be given
- iii. Additionally, they touched on the compatibility of traditional and “track” trainees and attempting to integrate these two in our current training scheme.

6. Communications Committee Update

a. *Thoracic Surgery News*

- i. Robroy MacIver requested any ideas of interest that might make a good story for the resident’s corner of TSN be sent to him at any time. He is always looking for ideas.
- ii. The TSN will soon be sent to all residents and attendings each month via e-mail
- iii. Future topics for upcoming segments include the TSRA review book and updating the residents on Dr. Baumgartner’s comments from earlier in the meeting

b. CTSNet

- i. Tom Nguyen mentioned that he would be able to post TSRA issues on CTSNet if we need him to do so.
- ii. There will be an “announcement” section coming soon to CTSNet which will also help with getting info out about resident issues.

c. TSRA Website

- i. Samuel Youseff has updated the website, specifically the history section of the TSRA, with the help of Daniel Boffa.
- ii. We would like the website to advance on three different frontiers over the next year or two
 1. Academics – we will start this process by linking the review book to our website and allow access to the book mainly from this site.

2. Scientific – The website could begin providing links to important papers or other academic information that will improve resident’s exposure to the science of our field
 3. Personal – this would be a section where certain attendings would be able to give vignettes and pearls of wisdom to trainees, and would also include a possible section that contains video archives of important lectures or talks from our national meetings.
- d. Review Book advertisement
 - i. Jason Williams reviewed the plan for advertising for the review book, which includes announcements at the resident lunches at the STS and AATS, blanket e-mails to all trainees, postings on the TSRA website and CTSNet, and inclusion of a TSN article about the new book.
 - ii. Shamus Carr pointed out that in order to increase our stock on Google, we need to try to control exclusive access to the review book on the TSRA website, so that each hit of the book comes from our site.
 - e. Other projects
 - i. Samuel Youseff presented the idea of a primer for incoming CT residents which could be sent to each resident after the match so that they could study it during their chief resident year or the remainder of their 4th year of medical school, depending on their program into which they have matched.
 - ii. The primer would consist of high yield reading and commentary on the most common issues that face junior CT surgery residents, including common surgical procedures and skills that are necessary for CT training (i.e. taking down the internal mammary artery, basic steps to cannulation, etc)
 - iii. The packet would include a welcome letter from the Presidents of the STS, AATS, and TSRA so that incoming trainees can immediately start assimilating into the field.
 - iv. Content can incorporate some of the high yield information from the Boot Camp manual, as well as the primer developed by Ramesh Singh and colleagues at the University of Colorado.
 - v. Dr. Fullerton mentioned that in all likelihood this primer will end up having a much wider audience than just incoming residents, and could include nurses, NPs, PAs, and General Surgery residents rotating in the ICUs.
7. TSRA Review of Cardiothoracic Surgery
 - a. Carlos Mery updated the current status of the book. The editing has been completed and the proofs will be sent to the authors shortly. We will plan to publish after the final authorization is given by the TSDA.
 - b. Distribution will be done through multiple formats. It will be available on-line on the TSRA website, as an e-book on feedbooks.com, or in print version from Amazon.com. There will also be a link sent at the bottom of each TSDA weekly curriculum e-mail.
 - c. Dr. Hicks suggested that this book should be vetted by an outside reviewer prior to publication. This could be done by one reviewer, or each chapter

- author could get an outsider to vet their chapter. We will discuss this in more detail once the time for publication draws closer.
- d. Planning for the second edition will begin shortly after this one is published. Preliminary thoughts are that this edition will have figures.
 - e. Ideally, we would like to publish the review book within the next few weeks.
8. Fellows/Electives Database Update
 - a. Ramesh Singh updated us regarding the database, which has been used quite extensively and is getting good reviews.
 - b. All institutions have been contacted for updates, and approximately 50% have responded. A new version should probably come out once a year.
 - c. Samuel Youseff and Beth Winer will work on making the access to this database easier on the TSRA website.
 9. Socrates Award Qualifications
 - a. This has traditionally been open only to faculty in ACGME programs.
 - b. We will change the TSRA bylaws to include this stipulation so there is no confusion in the future.
 10. International Relations
 - a. Yesterday a group of 12 people from Europe, Japan, and the US met to discuss the formation of a new CT training social network. The goal is not to create another professional society, but a social network which is internet based and which will allow for communication and exchange of ideas internationally.
 - b. Action items that were identified at this meeting include finalizing a name, developing a mission statement, determine the appropriate host (Facebook, CTSNet, etc), defining the target membership (residents, young attendings, etc), and determining a leadership structure.
 11. AATS Luncheon
 - a. Robroy MacIver will contact Dr. Patterson soon regarding logistics for the luncheon
 - b. A proposed topic is health care reform, although we are currently open to ideas and suggestions for speakers as well as topics for this luncheon.
 12. Presentation of In-service Exam survey data
 - a. Netu Sarkaria and Shamus Carr will be presenting the findings from these surveys on February 1st at 10:30 in the main conference room at the STS.
 - b. The basic findings discussed will be the reasons recruitment is becoming harder and harder for CT surgery.

Meeting adjourned by Carlos Mery at 6:06 PM PST.

Meeting time: 1:28.