SPRING 2026

Pediatric Short Cuts

AANS/CNS Section on Pediatric Neurological Surgery

CHAIR'S MESSAGE



Late spring is my favorite time of year, as the weather gets warmer, the days get longer, and the many opportunities of summer and travel beckon us to take advantage of them. After travelling to different places around the world and experiencing diverse cultures, I quickly realized that the way I do things is not the only way and (as my wife and children would quickly endorse) certainly may not be the best way to do them. With this in mind, I would like to encourage all of you to take advantage of the opportunity to engage in the Section. Each of you has unique ideas and skill sets that would undoubtedly make the Section better. Please reach out to me or any of your executive committee officers (Ruth Bristol, David Limbrick, and Amy Lee) if you would like to be more involved or have any ideas to make the Section better. The Section needs you!

Please join me in congratulating our national meeting chairs Jay Hauptman and Jesse Winer for putting together a wonderful pediatric program at the recent American Association of Neurological Surgeons Annual meeting in San Antonio. Thanks to many excellent faculty from the Section, the program was informative and comprehensive including rapid fire abstracts and sessions on functional neurosurgery and hydrocephalus. Mike Taylor was honored as the Matson Lecture recipient, and he delivered a compelling and thought-provoking talk on the origins, classification, and future of pediatric medulloblastoma treatment. It was especially fun to see one of our own Section members Al Cohen at a signing session for his new book titled *Comfort Always: Healing in the Age of Technology*. Congratulations Mike and Al!

Although it's months away, local hosts Nalin Gupta, Kurtis Auguste, Peter Sun, and Winson Ho are already well underway planning the upcoming Annual Pediatric Section meeting which takes place at the Hilton Union Square in San Francisco from December 3-6, 2026. This year's theme, *Bridging the Mind with Intelligent Tools*, aims to explore and update the Section on the advancements in technology and artificial intelligence that are permeating our specialty. Registration is already open so mark your calendars and make plans now!

Once again, I would like to remind members to sign up and participate in the major initiative that the Section launched this year called the Pediatric Section Research Group (PSRG), a collaborative network that is designed to facilitate greater participation in research among Section members and overall higher quality research for our field. Under the PSRG, eight separate Research Interest Groups (RIGs) have been established that investigate Chiari, Craniofacial, Epilepsy/Functional, Hydrocephalus, Neuro-oncology, Spine, Traumatic Brain Injury, and Vascular. RIGs are scheduled to meet and discuss collaborative research ideas virtually throughout the year and then in person with dedicated time and meeting space during the Annual Pediatric Section meeting. You can sign up for the RIGs while registering for the Annual meeting or by contacting the chair or vice chair of the RIG you are interested in. Please reach out to me, Todd Hankinson (PSSG Chair), or David Hersh (PSRG Vice Chair) with any questions or concerns.

In closing, as always, and on behalf of all the officers, please do not hesitate to reach out to any of us with comments, concerns or ideas regarding the Section. We welcome and encourage involvement of all members. Enjoy the summer!

Richard Anderson
Chair, AANS/CNS Section on Pediatric Neurological Surgery

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CHAIR-ELECT MESSAGE

FUTURE SITES

Ruth Bristol

The AANS/CNS Section on Pediatric Neurosurgery is happy to announce that the faculty of the Department of Neurological Surgery at the University of California San Francisco will host the 2026 meeting in **San Francisco, CA** from **December 3 to 6, 2026** at the Hilton Union Square. We look forward to working with Drs. Nalin Gupta, Kurtis Auguste, Winson Ho, and Peter Sun to put together a top notch meeting and activities befitting their great city. For 2027, we are optimistic about a beautiful venue on the west coast of Florida. Stay tuned for details!

If your team is interested in hosting in the future, please follow the link on the website to submit a proposal: https://pedsneurosurgery.org/proposal-to-host-the-annual-meeting/

ADVANCED PRACTICE PROVIDER COMMITTEE REPORT

Michelle Buontempo, N.P.

The APP Committee has launched a real-time clinical and professional inquiry chat utilizing WhatsApp to enable timely support with clinical questions and professional mentorship. Terms and conditions governing use of the chat were developed by the committee and distributed to participating members. The APP Newsletter was distributed in March 2026. APP Journal Club sessions continue to be very successful, with implanted EEG and pre-operative procedures (e.g. ERAS – Enhanced Recovery After Surgery) discussed in the January and April sessions, respectively, both of which have prompted process changes at different facilities. APP involvement on the Transition of Care Committee (TOCC) and RIGS remains ongoing, and the committee continues to request volunteers to assist with adult neurosurgery team education through the TOCC. Support has also been provided to the planning APPs for the San Francisco meeting, and an organizational support meeting was held last week to provide updates and share ideas on speakers, organization of the day, and additional hands-on experiences to be offered at the SF meeting.

Committee Members: Michelle Buontempo NP (Chair), E. Haley Vance DNP (Senior Advisor), Ana Diaz NP, Lisa McLennan DNP, Blakely Weatherford NP, Mandy Breedt NP, Jennifer Amon NP, Lauren Delgado NP, Samantha Himsworth NP, Alicia Cook NP

GUIDELINE COMMITTEE

Dan Donoho, MD

The Industry Relations Committee is pleased to announce that at this year's AANS/CNS Pediatric Neurological Surgery Section meeting in Memphis there will be two grant awards announced: the third annual KLS Martin Innovations Award ($20,000) and the first annual Sophysa Research Award ($20,000).

The KLS Martin Innovations Award is dedicated to supporting early-stage development of intellectual property for commercialization. At the conclusion of the scientific session on Friday December 5th of this year's meeting Andrew T. Hale, MD, PhD (University of Alabama at Birmingham neurosurgery resident), last year's recipient of the KLS Martin Innovations Award, will be presenting a virtual update on his research project: *Molecular test for personalized pharmacotherapy in arteriovenous malformations*. Dr. Hale conducted this project in conjunction with Kristopher T. Kahle, MD, PhD and their work has resulted in a provisional patent filing (Hale & Kahle co-inventors) which has been licensed to a start-up company, exemplifying the goal of this funding mechanism.

The new Sophysa Research Award is dedicated to supporting neurosurgical trainee lead research related to traumatic brain injury, intracranial hypertension, and hydrocephalus. We were thrilled to receive 14 excellent grant applications for the inaugural edition of this funding mechanism.

Lastly, we are pleased to announce that we are in late stage talks with Aesculap, Inc. to sponsor a third pediatric neurosurgery research grant in 2026.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Amy Lee, M.D.

The AANS/CNS Joint Section in Pediatric Neurological Surgery remains in sound financial health. Net assets as per the last available financial statement dated 6/30/25 totaled $1,042,502, reflecting a decrease of $89,349 from the prior year ($1,131,851) mainly due to the $250,000 donation to NREF's Champion fund in April of 2025. The net assets continue to maintain a comfortable reserve to support the annual meeting plus Section activities for two years without any additional revenue. As of 9/30/2025, the Pediatric section's investments had a market value of $1,380,011 with the total cost of $905,951.

Annual Meeting

Financials for the 2025 Memphis meeting were still pending review at the time of this report.

Long Term Investments

The Section's long-term investment account experienced a robust increase of $176,530 to $1,380,011. Notably, the Section's long-term investments are handled via a pooled investment portfolio with the other sections, which allows the sections to participate in funds not otherwise available to smaller investors. The Section also holds $500,000 of matched funds in the CNS Foundation.

Honor Your Mentor Funds

As of 6/30/2025, the A. Leland Albright fund had accumulated $66,105, with $16,757 in investment earnings, and had disbursed awards totaling $45,906. The Sanjiv Bhatia fund had accumulated $113,108, with $32,832 in investment earnings and had disbursed $7,717 (awards were previously subsidized by the Section and the ASPN). The Marion "Jack" Walker fund had accumulated $28,790, with $8,607 in investment earnings. The Walker fund was just over 50% of the way to the $50,000 milestone to begin award disbursement. The Jerry Oakes HYM fund had accumulated $14,610 with $3,584 in investment earnings.

Specific Expenses and Financial Resolutions

The Section continues to maintain and even expand its commitment toward its educational and research missions. Between the section research awards, the pediatric NREF fellowship award, domestic and international traveling fellowships, and industry-matched innovation awards, and private foundation donations, the section continues to offer nearly 20 different awards, with others on the way soon.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Suresh Magge

The Section's total membership stands at **737 members** as of Spring 2026, distributed across six categories: Active (391), Resident/Fellow (131), Lifetime (96), Associate (56), Medical Student (52), and International (37).

Category	Count
Active	391
Resident/Fellow	131
Lifetime	96
Associate	56
Medical Student	52
International	37

Membership Trends (2023–2026)

The table below tracks membership counts by class across the last seven reporting periods (Spring and Fall, 2023–2026). Total membership has ranged from 676 to 763 over this period, with the current Spring 2026 total of 737 representing a modest decline from Fall 2025 (763) but consistent with the multi-year trend.

Membership Class	2025 Dues	2026 Spring	2025 Fall	2025 Spring	2024 Fall	2024 Spring	2023 Fall	2023 Spring
Active	$150	390	391	383	377	370	359	368
International	$50	36	37	36	34	34	34	39
Adjunct/Associate	$75	56	56	54	48	37	33	33
Lifetime	$0	98	94	93	89	92	93	95
Medical Student	$0	19	47	43	29	19	45	38
Resident/Fellow	$0	138	128	136	121	124	159	161
TOTAL		**737**	**753**	**745**	**698**	**676**	**723**	**734**

TIMOTHY GEORGE COMMITTEE

Smruti Patel, MD and Kurtis Auguste, MD

At the annual Joint Section meeting in Memphis in December 2025, the co-chairs of the Timothy George Committee had the privilege of hosting 20 students from local Memphis high schools and community undergraduate programs, creating a meaningful opportunity to inspire the next generation of aspiring physicians. We are especially grateful to Drs. Brandon Rocque and Natalie Limoges for joining us as speakers and sharing their insights and experiences. Stryker was also very generous in their donation of both skull and spine models that we were able to gift to each of the students.

In addition, this year, the co-chairs, Drs. Kurtis Auguste and Smruti Patel visited UT Memphis medical school, where we connected with another 10 students ranging from years M1 to M3 who are interested in neurosurgery. During this session, we discussed the field broadly, offered practical tips for building strong residency applications, and shared our personal journeys into neurosurgery. Together, these efforts reflect our ongoing commitment to mentorship, education, and expanding access to opportunities within the field.

We look forward to building an even stronger outreach program for the upcoming meeting this year in San Francisco!

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Hal Meltzer and Eric Thompson

National Meetings Subcommittee

Jay Hauptman, Jesse Winer, and the other members of the national meetings subcommittee provided fantastic pediatric scientific content for this year's AANS and CNS annual meetings. In San Antonio, we celebrated the 2026 Matson Lecturer, Dr. Michael Taylor, who inspired us with his career achievements in pediatric surgical neuro-oncology. The selected abstracts this year were incredible and highlighted many trainees and PIs in our field. There were special sessions on the current research in hydrocephalus, pediatric epileptology, and functional/pain neurosurgery as well as an opportunity to celebrate and socialize with Dr. Taylor at the Matson Reception. The subcommittee is already hard at work planning for the upcoming 2027 AANS meeting in San Diego.

The CNS annual meeting will be held in Washington, DC, from October 31 to November 4. Celebrating this year's theme of "evolution", the subcommittee has put together an exciting program highlighting the latest clinical and scientific updates, as well as seminars and panel discussions in collaboration with the adult Spine and Functional Sections. A half-day symposium will review decision making in epilepsy surgery with leaders in both neurologic and surgical epileptology and a lunch seminar in collaboration with the adult Spine Section will review the process of multidisciplinary program building for complex congenital and acquired spinal deformities. Special sessions will focus on the process of pediatric clinical trials and creating adult transitional care programs.

Examination Questions Subcommittee

Jessica Lane and the other committee members have crafted 30 new questions to date which exceeds the minimum 20 requested. The 30 new questions will be edited for clarity and any overlapping questions will be combined as needed. Pediatric topics include trauma, vascular, epilepsy, congenital, and neoplastic. The committee was also asked to explore the possibility of AI generated questions using the CNS chatbot. While clinical vignettes and multiple choice options were readily created, the large language model had more difficulty composing critique/explanations to match the requested format. Likewise, references/citations tended towards CNS published guidelines rather than primary sources. It will be interesting to see how the use of AI generated questions continues to evolve.

Podcast Subcommittee

Heather Spader and Vijay Ravindra continue to grow the Insights in Pediatric Neurosurgery podcast as both a platform for engaging guest interviews and a forum for thoughtful discussion of key controversies in pediatric neurosurgery. Recent episodes have explored topics such as Chiari malformations, team-based surgery, operating room myths, and "Plastic Surgery Secrets" with guest Dr. Thomas Wilson. A Controversies episode featuring an arachnoid cyst case study was also very well received. There have also been opportunities to interview leaders in our field including Dr. Jeffrey Ojemann reviewing leadership lessons and Dr. Eisha Christian on pediatric neurosurgery in Ukraine. Please send ideas for future topics to Heather Spader at hls3e@virginia.edu.

Travelling Fellowship Subcommittee

Congratulations to the most recent cohort of traveling fellows:

- Jean-Paul Bryant (Georgetown)—travelling to CHOP/Flanders
- Adam Glaser (Harvard)—travelling to Hospital for Sick Children/Ibrahim
- Kerrin Sunshine (Case)—travelling to Texas Children's/Weiner
- Emily Chapman (Mount Sinai)—travelling to Texas Children's/Weiner
- Grace Djone (Cote d'Ivorie)—travelling to CHOP/Storm
- Francis Campbell (Nigeria)—travelling to Hopkins/Cohen

Webinars Subcommittee

We contnue to have excellent attendance at recent webinars. We have two upcoming webinars and will contiune on the q3 month lecture schedule, though subcommittee leadership may increase the frequency to q2 months in the future. Recent webinars included:

- June 21 2026: Howard Weiner, Benjamin Kennedy, Hannah Goldstein. Surgical Epilepsy
- April 28 2026 George Jallo, Matthew J. Recker, NiraliPatel . Spinal Tumors
- Jan 2026: Moise Danielpour, Mari Grove, Alex Tucker, Kurt Lehner. Achondroplasa and craniocervical pathology

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Laila Mohammad, MD and Brandon Miller, MD, PhD

This cycle, the Research Committee has focused on formalizing subcommittee structure, supporting the development of Research Interest Groups (RIGs), and expanding accessible research resources.

At the 2025 Pediatric Section meeting, committee members attended all RIG sessions to gather direct input on barriers, needs, and opportunities. These insights are guiding the development of targeted resources, including an updated website presence and practical tools to support study development and multi-institutional collaboration. Members interested in participating in any initiative or learning more are encouraged to reach out at pedssectionresearch@gmail.com.

Grants Subcommittee
Afshin Salehi and Winson Ho, Co-Chairs

The Grants Subcommittee received and reviewed 14 applications for the Sophysa Young Investigator Award and 10 applications for the KLS Martin Award during the most recent grant cycle. Awardees were selected following committee review and were announced at the Pediatric Section meeting in Memphis. The subcommittee also received 8 applications for the Pediatric Section Grant, which are currently under review.

To help standardize the review process, the subcommittee implemented the NIH Simplified Review Framework, with reviewers assigning scores for Factor 1, Factor 2, and Overall Impact. This provides a more structured and consistent approach to evaluating applications and will serve as a framework for future review cycles. The subcommittee also formalized the Notice of Award process for grant awardees. Moving forward, the Grants Subcommittee will draft the Notice of Award on a section letterhead and submit it to the Pediatric Section Chair for review and signature prior to distribution to awardees and their institutions.

In addition, we are developing a detailed Grants Subcommittee Playbook to help future Grant Subcommittee Chairs standardize operations. This will include key contacts, annual deadlines, reviewer instructions, award notification workflows, fund distribution contacts, and other practical details needed to run the grant process efficiently and consistently.

Clinical Research Subcommittee
Hassan Akbari and Jonathan Pindrik, Co-Chairs

The Clinical Research Subcommittee continues to work toward establishing and supporting multi-institutional research collaborations across the Section. We applaud Dr. Todd Hankinson for his work on creating several Research Interest Groups (RIGs) spanning several areas of neurosurgery. The Clinical Research Subcommittee fully supports these efforts and will help facilitate further collaborations by creating a shared repository of clinical research resources, developing a multi-institutional research guide to help researchers navigate multi-institutional networks, and creating a directory of researchers interested in collaborating in multisite protocols. The Subcommittee is also working on additional efforts to improve visibility of ongoing and completed multi-site research.

NeuroPoint Alliance (under Clinical Networks)
David Hersh, Chair

The NeuroPoint Alliance QOD Pediatric Tumor Surgery Registry continues to move forward with strong national engagement. A modified Delphi process was recently completed to define the core outcome set for inclusion in the registry, helping to ensure that the data elements reflect clinically meaningful outcomes for children undergoing brain tumor surgery. The manuscript describing this work is currently under revision with the Journal of Neuro-Oncology.

Development of the registry is also progressing. The REDCap database is nearly finalized, business associate agreements are being drafted, and funding opportunities are being actively explored to support registry launch and sustainability. To date, approximately 35 sites have signed on to participate, reflecting broad enthusiasm for a collaborative pediatric neuro-oncology surgical registry.

We look forward to sharing additional updates as the registry moves toward activation.

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RESEARCH COMMITTEE (CONTINUED)

Basic Science Research Subcommittee
Wes Phillips and Jarod Roland, Co-Chairs

The Basic Science subcommittee and the research committee at large are compiling a list of pediatric neurosurgeons who are interested in mentoring and collaborating on research projects. This database will be available on the peds section website, and requests to connect with individual neurosurgeons will be processed via the ped section research committee email address. This will allow for requests to be properly vetted.

We anticipate that this will lead to more one-on-one collaboration and mentorship and allow for junior faculty to get tailored advice for their research. The database will be organized by research interests and have links to faculty laboratory websites and Google Scholar or PubMed publication lists.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Co-Chairs: Neena Marupudi and Randaline Barnett

The Communications Committee continues to modernize and strengthen how we connect across the Pediatric Section, with a focus on accessibility, engagement, and efficient information sharing. Through our Website, Social Media, Survey, and Listserv Subcommittees, we are building a more streamlined and responsive communication platform for our membership.

The **Website Subcommittee** is currently leading a comprehensive redesign of the AANS/CNS Pediatric Section website—our most significant ongoing initiative. This effort is focused on creating a modern, intuitive, and user-friendly platform with streamlined navigation and improved organization of high-value content. The homepage is being restructured to highlight meetings, news, and key updates, while the overall site architecture is being redesigned to support easier maintenance and real-time updates. Our goal is to launch the new website in time for the **2026 Joint Pediatric Section Annual Meeting (December 3–6, 2026, San Francisco, CA**), providing a more dynamic and accessible resource for all members.

The **Social Media Subcommittee** continues to expand its reach and engagement across Twitter (X), Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Growth across all platforms reflects increasing interaction from members and the broader community. Ongoing efforts include promoting meetings, educational content, and Section initiatives, with expanded plans to highlight podcasts, leadership and committee spotlights, fellowship match guidance, and new educational offerings such as the ***Webinar Series*** (Pediatric Neurosurgery Section—YouTube), ***Global Journal Club, and Pediatric Educational Surgical Video Channel*** (Pediatric Neurosurgery Section—YouTube).

The **Survey Subcommittee** has implemented a streamlined and reliable distribution process. Surveys are submitted through a secure centralized email (PedsNSGsurvey@gmail.com), reviewed by the Survey Subcommittee Chair, and then routed through the Communications Committee for approval prior to Web Blast distribution. This standardized workflow has improved ease of submission, tracking, and turnaround time, with ongoing successful survey distributions.

The **Listserv Subcommittee** continues to support efficient Section-wide communication by maintaining a reliable platform for announcements and member engagement.

Overall, the Communications Committee remains committed to adapting to evolving communication technologies while strengthening connectivity across our membership. We look forward to the upcoming website launch and continued progress in enhancing communication across the Pediatric Section.

TRANSITION OF CARE COMMITTEE

Bermans Iskandar and Brandon Rocque (admin. Kaitlyn Esposito)

The successful and systematic transition and transfer of care of patients living with congenital neurosurgical conditions to adult providers has faced significant obstacles. While some pediatric neurosurgeons have committed to following their patients into adulthood, logistical difficulties and institutional constraints, such as limitations imposed by children's hospitals and the complexities of adult medical care, make this increasingly unsustainable. There also remains a relative lack of interest, training, or practicality in adult neurosurgical practice to care for these patients, and the persistence of significant administrative and financial hurdles make standardization of transition difficult. As a result, many patients struggle to access the same high-quality care they received in childhood.

The TOCC aims to develop strategies, processes, and templates to support neurosurgical programs in implementing transition-of-care initiatives. Initially, the committee will focus on transitioning patients with hydrocephalus and spina bifida, expanding later to other congenital conditions. Our efforts will address challenges at multiple levels, including patient care (Readiness and Transition Subcommittee), healthcare providers (Transfer & Continuity Subcommittee), infrastructure and reimbursement (Business Model & Coding Subcommittee). Additional subcommittees will continue to be developed as specific issues arise. For instance, our new Adult Neurosurgeon's Advisory Subcommittee (co-chairs: Mark Hamilton and Stephanie Robert) focuses on the needs and concerns of adult neurosurgical colleagues. Relevant policy development and implementation will also be forthcoming and, accordingly, a Policy Subcommittee (co-chairs: Joe Piatt and Diana Gray) has been formed to address policy-related issues in lockstep with major neurosurgical organizations, including the AANS, CNS, and CSNS.

Specifically, the TOC Committee is dedicated to 1) developing standardized transition-of-care templates to help neurosurgical programs enhance continuity and quality of care at their institutions, and 2) establishing structured APP-led clinics to manage the complex non-surgical aspects of patient care, ensuring a more seamless and comprehensive transition into adulthood. Under this model, APPs would receive specialized training and work in structured collaboration with neurosurgeons within a rational infrastructure and sustainable financial framework.

The following are updates from the main TOC subcommittees:

Readiness and Transition Subcommittee
Laila Mohammad and Dorothy Poppe, Co-chairs

The Readiness and Transition Subcommittee has an overarching goal to minimize friction and maximize readiness prior to, and at the time when transition of care occurs for both the patient and provider. The subcommittee recently conducted 15 institutional interviews with 17 participants, purposively sampled from different institution types, various geographies and relatively diverse clinical roles. A five-type program typology emerged from the data, that objectively classified institutions based on the relative formality or informality of its transition of care processes. The group believes this typology will provide a practical framework for institutional self-assessment and ongoing quality improvement in the development and improvement of transition of care activities, considerate of the resources available at any given hospital system.

Additionally, a TOCC-endorsed resolution was recently approved by the CSNS in support of work to assess current practices in transition of care on the adult neurosurgical end, including referrals, follow-up patterns, applicable billing codes, etc. to better understand perceived self-efficacy and resources available to adult providers in this space.

Upcoming projects for this subcommittee will include publishing the results of the above described work, commencing a similar survey in the adult neurosurgeon population to better characterize their attitudes and available resources in the landscape of transition of care, and the development of tools based on completed work to be used by providers at varying levels and the institutions that employ them such that the burden of transition activities might be reduced for patients and families.

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TRANSITION OF CARE COMMITTEE (CONTINUED)

Transfer & Continuity Subcommittee
Haley Vance and Smruti Patel, Co-chairs

The Transfer and Continuity Subcommittee goals include identifying the appropriate providers to deliver neurosurgical care for adults requiring transition. The main focus during the past year has been to address the population of patients transitioning care with the diagnosis of hydrocephalus. The complexity and spectrum of hydrocephalus is certainly well known to pediatric neurosurgery providers; however, the nuances may not be well established in adult models of care. Seeing as neurosurgery Advanced Practice Providers (APPs) are well positioned to provide comprehensive and ongoing medical care to these patients with adult neurosurgeon support and oversight, this subcommittee is in the final developing drafts of clinical practice guidelines for transition and management of patients with hydrocephalus, intended for use by providers interested in transitional care. A survey is currently being administered to pediatric neurosurgeons with a goal of developing a "consensus" treatment plan for specific case scenarios. The results of this survey are being compiled and will be included in the final iteration of the clinical practice guideline to serve as a "gut-check" for any APPs that may eventually take on hydrocephalus patients who have transitioned to adult care in the longer term.

The clinical practice guidelines and subsequent results of all surveys administered through this committee will then be utilized to facilitate this subcommittee's next step: developing and executing an educational bootcamp. The purpose of this bootcamp is to educate and empower APPs to staff proposed transitional clinics. The newly formed Adult Neurosurgeon's Advisory Subcommittee will also be involved in the planning and advertisement of this bootcamp. Ultimately, this subcommittee will continue to support the training of transitional care providers in areas of need and continued education/mentorship.

Business Model & Coding Subcommittee
Andrew Kobets and Darian Esfahani, Co-chairs

The goal of the Business Model & Coding Subcommittee is to develop or adapt sustainable business plans and reimbursement models that support transition-of-care initiatives. We are currently collaborating with the Pediatric Neurosurgery Coding and Reimbursement Committee and CSNS Reimbursement Committee to better understand what is, and is not possible for reimbursement and billing in pediatric-to-adult neurosurgical transitions. With guidance from the PCRC, the TOCC plans to develop templates and tipsheets to encourage more transitional work. Importantly, common CPT codes will be compiled for patients who transition from pediatric to adult neurosurgical care, particularly to understand reimbursement strategies for providers on the adult side, including clinics that may be led by APPs in the future.

Pediatric neurosurgeons, APPs, fellows, residents, or students interested in serving on the TOC committee would be most welcome, and should contact Benny Iskandar (iskandar@neurosurgery.wisc.edu) or Brandon Rocque (Brandon.Rocque@childrensal.org).

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

Greg Olavarria, MD, Laura Prolo, MD and Viren Desai, MD

The charter of the Quality Improvement (QI) Committee specifies the following responsibilities of the committee: 1) evaluate the current state of quality initiatives around the country and at Canadian centers, 2) determine the infrastructure needed to develop new quality programs, and 3) provide education on the Science of Improvement and Safety to surgeons interested in broadening their "QI IQ". Multi-center collaboration is the key to advancing the field, and we have continued this work over this reporting period:

We have expanded the articles on the QI webpage of the Peds Section to include articles on postoperative care of Chiari and tethered cord surgery. We will add new literature on quality initiatives as they become available. We also completed a membership survey on common surgical practice and practice variations, with 50 members of the section responding (wound closure and care, postop care). We are tabulating and analyzing the results and this will appear on the website as well as a published paper later this year.

Dr. Desai is continuing to lead the effort to make the QI page a repository for institutional care improvement protocols to share with the membership. This will later be used to educate residents and fellows on quality measures that have proven effective so they can incorporate these into their practice. Dr Prolo has started an initiative to provide educational materials to parents in other languages, starting with Spanish. This will be a joint effort between the AAP healthy children website (SONS) and our QI committee.

There is a trend toward sending neurosurgery patients to the floor or EMU after SEEG or Chiari surgery or tethered cords. While this may not apply to all hospitals, we think it worthwhile to share the existing practice patterns for disposition to floor instead of ICU and will share this on the website, with an eventual membership survey.

Lastly, NSQIP is a very large registry of patient outcomes. We hope to develop one or two queries for NSQIP on areas for performance improvement for our speciality.

Thank you. Further ideas from the Section membership are greatly appreciated.

AWARDS COMMITTEE REPORT

Co-chairs: Sara Hartnett-Wright and Trey McClugage

As a result of another successful annual meeting, we presented a total of 8 awards through the section this past year in Memphis. The awardees are listed here.

A special THANK YOU to the following Pediatric Section Members for their time and commitment as abstract judges: O. A. "Tola" Roberts, Brandon Rocque, Jacob Lepard, Smruti Patel, Hassan Akbari, Nir Shimony, Michelle Wedemeyer, Kimberly Hamilton, Joseph Piatt, Ann Flannery, and Laurie Ackerman.

Award Name	Recipient
Best Oral Presentation Regarding Global Surgery	Jacob Lepard, MD
Meghan Rose Bradley Foundation Award for Best Abstract on Tumor	Himanshu Sharma, MD
The Timothy George DEI Award for Best Poster Presentation	Laila Mohammed, MD
The Timothy George DEI Award for Best Oral Presentation	Katherine Chandler, MD
Schulman Award for Best Overall Presentation by Resident	Karim Mithani, MD
The Bobby Jones Chiari & Syringomyelia Foundation Award winner	Kerrin Sunshine, MD
Hydrocephalus Association Award	Julia Pazniokas, MD
Molly Hubbard Award for Best Paper by Pediatric Neurosurgery Fellow	Chesney Bilitier, MD

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Eisha Christian and Tola Roberts

Vision Statement: Providing a leadership role in promoting and coordinating global neurosurgical efforts among section members.

Primary Goal: To determine global neurosurgical educational activities, identify regional international education experts, and promote international educational, collaborative, and research activities through these experts.

Summary of Committee Impact: The IRC continues to advance global pediatric neurosurgery through education, clinical collaboration, and international partnerships. The committee's efforts in standardizing curriculum, expanding mentoring, and fostering research collaborations are central to its mission. The Sanjeev Bhatia Fellowship, Member Survey and international journal clubs remain highlights of the year, reflecting the committee's commitment to global engagement and professional development.

Committee Highlights

Global Journal Clubs

February 7–8, 2026: Japan
Topic: Spasticity Management



May 30, 2026: India
Topic: Thermocoagulative hemispherotomy



August 24, 2026: Brazil
Topic: TBD

November 2026: Philippines
Topic: TBD

The International Relations Committee also sponsored in-country endoscopy course: Rwanda/Burundi.

















CODING AND REIMBURSEMENT COMMITTEE (PCRC) REPORT

Viren Desai, MD, Meena Vessell, MD and David Bonda, MD

The Pediatric Coding and Reimbursement Committee (PCRC), which was formerly an individual liaison position, continues to expand its membership since its inaugural year. We have expanded to 24 members and continue to welcome new membership. The PCRC provides a forum to deliberate on coding and reimbursement issues specific to pediatric neurosurgery, serving as a voice on behalf of our community. Within this realm, the PCRC is dedicated to advocacy, inquiry, education and study of pediatric neurosurgical coding.

Clinical Resources

PCRC remains committed to improving pediatric coding resources and enhancing value and accuracy. In 2025, we added detailed pediatric coding recommendations to the 2025 AANS Guide to Coding book edited by Joseph Cheng, John Ratliff and Luis Tumialan. The book serves as a primary coding reference for daily practice.

Since that foundational step, we are working towards creating a separate coding manual hosted by the Pediatric Section which will provide the most comprehensive and in depth resource for pediatric coding yet.

We are collaborating with the Transition of Care Committee to help define helpful resources involved in coding and billing for the transition of care and spina bifida populations.

Education

The PCRC contributed pediatric content to the AANS Coding & Reimbursement Courses on June 18th, 2026. We continue to add more detailed pediatric focused content each year. We encourage attendance by neurosurgeons, advanced practice providers, practice administrators, coders and billers. More information can be found at: https://www.aans.org/course/neurosurgical-coding-and-reimbursement/.

Study & Inquiry

In 2024, PCRC released a survey to section members through the section Survey Committee. This survey informed the results of a paper entitled, "Pediatric Neurosurgery Procedural Coding: Current Lay of the Land" which has been accepted to *Neurosurgery Practice*, a subsidiary of the CNS Neurosurgery Publications group.

PCRC's hope is for members to become informed and actionable with regards to coding and reimbursement for the betterment of pediatric neurosurgeons nationwide. Please consider joining if these sentiments resonate with you. The Committee looks forward to reporting back on further work in the next edition of Shortcuts.

INDUSTRY RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Michael McDowell and Brian Hanak

At this year's AANS/CNS Pediatric Neurological Surgery Section meeting in San Francisco, three grant awards will be announced: the fourth annual KLS Martin Innovations Award ($20,000), the second annual Sophysa Research Award ($20,000), and the first annual Aesculap Research Award ($20,000). Application details and eligibility criteria will be posted to the Section webpage mid-year.

The committee is also seeking to secure time at the Section meeting — a dedicated session or lunch talk — for presentations from award winners, including two returning winners with updates and three new winners.

AANS/CNS JOINT SECTION ON PEDIATRIC NEUROSURGERY OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

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David Giles

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Bermans Iskandar
Mark Krieger

Lifetime Achievement Award
(Frank Ingraham Award for Distinguished Service):
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Liaison with Pakistan
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Micahel Partington
George Koutsouras
Katherine Holste, Resident
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Current Chair of ABPNS Mark Krieger

Liaison with ACPNF
Current Chair of ACPNF Jodi Smith

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Current President of ASPN Dody Robinson

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