



Constitution SBNS Academic Committee

Background:

The Academic Committee is a long-established structure within the Society. Its role has evolved over the years, from a focus for academics organising the BNRG meetings to creating the UK Neurosurgical Research Network and promoting translational research and clinical trials within the ever-evolving climate of modern health care research.

The AC has assumed an increasing role in the promotion and support of neurosurgical research, with the emergence of NHS driven research activities within the Specialist Groups. The current AC structure (since 2020) had one lead and one deputy from each subspeciality, and did not deliver on the aim of increasing research within these specialist groups, due in part to a lack of engagement from some committee members.

Furthermore, the Covid pandemic was a challenging environment for neurosurgery research with many trials suspended and some closed. A national neurosurgery MRC grant application for live nervous tissue research was not successful and highlighted the fragmented nature of laboratory and translational research across the UK and Ireland.

The AC needs to restructure with a smaller core committee of active members and the introduction of three time limited working groups that will provide an opportunity for the wider SBNS membership to participate in these endeavours.

Structure of the Academic Committee:

- Chairperson
- Research Manager
- BNRG lead
- Mentorship lead
- BNTRC Representative
- BNTA Representative
- Ex officio member – President of SBNS
- Basic and translational science lead and deputy (2)
- Clinical trials lead and deputy (2)
- Med Tech/Innovation/ Health Tech/Robotics leads (2)

Total membership: 13

Specific Responsibilities of the Academic Committee

- Promote basic, translational and clinical neurosurgical research UK wide (and where appropriate assist with international collaboration)
- Nurture the development of multicentre clinical trials
- Support the initiation and delivery of clinical registries of outcome data
- Assist the British Neurosurgical Trainee Research Collaborative in the delivery of trainee-led and trainee-supported research projects
- Review requests for the circulation of academic/research surveys
- Participate in abstract selections/rankings for SBNS meetings
- Take a lead in the running and program design of the BNRG
- Review elective bursary applications
- Support the work of the research manager in delivering the aims of the committee

Specific Responsibilities of the Working Groups

1. Basic and translational science
 - Identify the network of basic and translational scientist-neurosurgeons
 - Develop a network grant application
2. Clinical Trials
 - Provide a forum for discussion and development of clinical trials
 - Identify potential new chief investigators to develop their own trials
 - Host a clinical trials sandpit / workshop
 - Formulate a manuscript for publication 'The Future of Neurosurgery Trials'
3. Med Tech/Innovation/Health Tech/Robotics
 - Identify the network of neurosurgeons undertaking this research
 - Establish a directory of which units have access to technologies (e.g. iMRI, robotics) that would enable the development of a Surgical Advanced Therapeutics Platform for future trials

Election of the Chairperson

The Chairperson, who is to be an SBNS member, will be appointed by the SBNS president on the recommendation of the SBNS Council. Nominations will be sought from current AC members.

In order to fulfil the SBNS constitution which states that the Chairman of any sub-committee is to be an elected Council member there will be a formal application process with Council

electing and ratifying the appointment. Delegation of powers by Council to the new chairman would follow. The Chairperson will be an ex-officio member of SBNS Council.

The Chairpersonship will be for a period of 3 years and may be once-renewable by mutual agreement.

Similarly the other members of the Academic committee will be for a period of 3 years in the first instance with the option of an additional 3 year term, with the exception of the working leads who will hold office for a period of 2 years.

Committee meetings will be held every 4 months. The March and July meetings will be virtual and the third will be a face to face meeting at the annual BNRG in November.

Reviewed: August 2014, April 2019, November 2019, January 2023, November 2024