

ANESTHESIA NEWSLETTER



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Chairman's Corner

By Carin A. Hagberg, M.D.

1. For those of you who were unable to attend the evening of the Substance Abuse Lecture given by Dr. Roberta Hines, please make sure that you read the November, 2008 review article by Bryson & Silverstein in Anesthesiology and go onto the ASA website for substance abuse and complete the 10 questions at the end of the study program. You must see Cheryl Loudd and sign that you completed this assignment. Additionally, I highly recommend that you check out the DVD, "Wearing Masks" and take it home to watch with your significant other or close relative.
2. Please keep in mind that the number one reason a resident receives an unsatisfactory on the essential attributes #5 is because of substance abuse. I do encourage you to watch over each other. There is an internal substance abuse committee composed of the following faculty members: Mary Rabb, Evan Pivalizza, Steve Larson, Chuck Gilmore, Peter Doyle and myself. If anyone has a question or possible problem with substance abuse, please feel free to contact one of these individuals.
3. The new test date for the ITE is March 7, 2009 which allows the CA3 residents more time to study for their oral board examination. As you are aware, the wrong norm table was distributed this year as a result of using a different vendor (Castle). A new vendor will be chosen next year. The 1996 ITE will soon become available and although the questions are no longer used, I recommend that you get a copy of this test and review it.
4. I want to thank Mike Mullens for hosting this year's Halloween Party in his home. I heard that it was a smash! Our next social event will be a kickball game between the residents and the faculty on December 6th at the UT Recreation Center softball fields. A victory party will follow at Little Woodrow's. The department will also host a Wellness Day to be held in conjunction with a Fun Run at Memorial Park.
5. Beginning March 1, the 24 hour call will be enforced for those residents who do not attend 70% of the

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- conferences, hand in their case log books at the appropriate time or don't sign off on their goals/objectives at the end of each rotation.
6. The Joint Commission (TJC) is in the middle of reviewing HCHD. TJC accreditation is required for hospitals to receive federal funds in addition to being an endorsement of a hospital's quality, so it is really important. During the review, the site visitors will likely interact with you, so please cooperate fully and professionally with the reviewers. The following issues pertain directly to you:
 - a. A pre-anesthesia assessment should be conducted and signed by the attending.
 - b. A patient should be reevaluated immediately before moderate or deep sedation and before anesthesia induction.
 - c. Print your name with your HCHD number below your signature. **All** orders must be dated and timed! Also, prn orders must have an indication.
 - d. Remember to use full barrier technique for insertion of central lines (gown, cap, mask, gloves and head to toe sterile sheets). Additionally, there should be no eating or drinking in patient care areas.
 - e. Do not use abbreviations such as U, qd, qod, IU, MSO₄, MS or MGSO₄
 - f. Critical values/test results reported to you must be accepted and read back.
 - g. If you are doing a procedure that requires consent, you should do a time out. In the OR, EVERYONE in the room has to participate and listen to the person performing the time that confirms that it is the correct patient and correct procedure.

"The new test date for the ITE is March 7, 2009."

Residency Director's Corner

By Mary Rabb, M.D.

Congratulations to Olga and Tim Pawelek on the birth of their son Alexander Timothy. He was born November 11 at 8:51am, weighing in at 6 lbs, 7 oz!

Resident Recruitment has begun! We have received over 750 applications and have extended 200+ interview invitations this year. Our first interview date was Friday November 7 and we had a great turnout. We have a great group of applicants this year, and judging by the number of interviews, the residency office will be quite busy for the next few months. Thank you to the Resident Recruitment Committee & our wonderful residents: we couldn't make it through the season without your energy, enthusiasm, and willingness to help. We encourage everyone to come out to the interview happy hours scheduled on Thursday evenings!

Senior Mock Oral sessions will be held on Fridays at 1:30 pm during interview season. The first session was held Friday November 7. We plan to have each CA-3 cycle through at least one Mock Oral by the end of January. Mock Oral assignments will be made prior to the beginning of each month, so be sure to check your email. Special thanks to Dr. Michael Ho for his input, to Dr. Evan Pivalizza for taking care of the scheduling and structuring the format, and to all of our faculty examiners for your time and expertise!

As a reminder, the 2009 In-Training Exam will be held March 7. All residents must sit for the exam, failure to do so will cause you to be placed on Intra-departmental Academic watch. Additionally, the deadline for the 2008 Written Board Examination is December 15, 2008. All graduating CA-3 residents must make sure to register by the deadline in order to be eligible for Board certification.

And last but not least, we would like to announce that our UTMB residents' last day in our department was October 31, 2008. We want to bid them a fond farewell and good luck with their future endeavors

"The anesthesia recruitment office will be quite busy for the next few months."

Faculty News

Articles:

• **Hagberg CA, Law JA:** Video laryngoscopy and the difficult airway – image is everything. *Anesthesiology News; Guide to Airway Management* 91-8, 2008

• Ghelber O, Gebhard R, Vora S, **Hagberg C**, Szmuk P: Identification of the epidural space utilizing pressure measurement with the Compuflo® injection pump – A pilot study. *Reg Anesth Pain Med* 33(4):346-52, 2008

Chapters:

• **Hagberg C.** Airway blocks. *Peripheral Nerve Blocks: A Color Atlas*. In: JE Chelly (ed), Lippincott-Williams & Wilkins, Philadelphia, pp.179-84, 2008

Lectures:

• **Hagberg C:** "Alternative Airway Management Devices", Minnesota Society of Anesthesiologists 2008 Fall Conference, Nov. 8, 2008, St. Paul, Minnesota

Awards:

• Hagberg CA: 2ND Annual John Silas Lundy, M.D. Memorial Award, November 8, 2008

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7. I want you to be well differentiated from a CRNA. As the job market shrinks, fewer medical students will go into anesthesiology and more residents will enter fellowships. Please keep this in mind as you progress through your training.
8. Interview season officially starts Nov. 7 and with it, oral board exams in a format very similar to the official oral board exam. We have had almost 350 applications made to our program, and we plan to interview 200 over 10 sessions. Please welcome our interviewees.
9. Our airway/cadaver workshop will be held in the simulator lab on 12/16 and 12/17. We will use the same relief system as last year, as it worked well.
10. The post call residents will be the first to go through 2 stations (airway/regional). Once done, they will return to the OR to relieve the next set of residents. The call team will come at 12:30 p.m. and go through the workshop. Once done, they will also go to the OR and break out residents.

Political Corner

By Evan Pivalizza, MBChB

Time will tell how the results of recent national and local elections impact our personal and professional practice as physicians. It is timely to reflect on the departments' ASA-PAC 2008 contributions, which may not have included folks who kindly donated at the TSA or ASA annual meetings (will be reflected in 2009 records).

When ASA officers, staff and lobbyists advocate on our behalf in a bi-partisan fashion, their efficacy is limited by the dismal involvement of the professionals that they represent. For Texas for 2008, involvement was 14.1% so as disappointing as that is, ours is even worse with resident contributions received from 11% of the class (Mac Baker, Olga Lyuksyutova, Tim Pawelek, Trey Rachel, Scott Roethle, Shaina Sheppard and Chris Strouse) and for faculty, even worse at 6% (Garcia,

Chief Chat



We wish our fellow UTMB residents well as they return to Galveston this month. Thanks to our residents for helping them feel welcome and showing them the ropes.

The Halloween Party was a hit! Fabulous costumes ranged from the oh-so-real look-alike Slasher to Hannah Montana, a monk, the grim reaper, the Flintstone Gang, a Merrill Lynch jailbird, a Lucky Charms leprechaun, one of our pregnant resident's perfectly round abdomen representing a globe, and mummies made out of four rolls of toilet paper!

The chiefs have worked hard with Drs. Hagberg and Rabb to now allow vacations to be taken at outside hospitals. This will allow residents more flexibility in choosing their vacation dates and not spread the workforce too thin at Hermann.

We are also working hard to organize the Residency Application Interview Days. The first group of medical

Khalil, Pivalizza). Note that actual contribution, esp. on a resident's salary is as important as the amount pledged, there are mechanisms to pay monthly and avoid a large one-time payment and that for many private practice groups and academic departments around the country, 100% participation is encouraged or mandated.

On the TSA-PAC front for state and local elections, bi-partisan distributions were extremely successful with the vast majority of medicine-enlightened or supportive candidates being elected. In an upcoming run-off for Texas Senate 17, Joan Huffman has stated in print that she will do all in her power to protect tort reforms and Chris Bell is heavily endorsed and supported by trial lawyers. As always, I urge your careful consideration of candidates, their positions and statements before voting and regular review of the PAC sites at members-only sections of the ASA and TSA websites.

"I urge your careful consideration of candidates before voting."

student applicants for our anesthesiology program will be interviewing Friday Nov. 7. In addition, we are busy coordinating the cadaver labs to be started this month and preparing for the next JAHCO site visit.

Keep up the good work residents!

"Keep up the good work."

It is better to light a candle than
curse the darkness.
Eleanor Roosevelt

Coding/Billing Issues

By Shirley Hillman

CompuRecord has gone LIVE at LBJ!! We are gradually moving out of the dark ages for billing. Of course, with all new innovations, there will be bugs that need to be worked out. When documenting on the Electronic Medical Record (EMR), times are recorded for the documentation which could be risky. Best Business Practice states that all documentation should be done in “real time”. It would not be ethical to attest to something that has not yet occurred. Please be aware of your documentation timeline.



Documentation of procedures being performed in the OR is crucial for billing purposes. When simple terms such as upper/lower are not written, the coding person must choose the lower paying code, thus reducing our revenue. We do a substantial amount of abdominal procedures, so a substantial amount of revenue is lost when the simple term “upper” is omitted from the anesthesia procedure written on the anesthesia record.

Please remember anesthesia billing is based on time. If you neglect to put a stop time on your record, that is another large potential loss of revenue. The only amount of time that can be billed is the time charted on the graph when no stop time is written. Anesthesia stop time is when the anesthesia provider is no longer in personal attendance, which is when the patient is safely placed under post operative supervision (PACU).

Do not ever round your start or stop time, as this is the number one reason for prosecution of anesthesia providers. Also, **do not ever** include in the billing time your pre-op and post-op visits.

On a good note –The RAC (Recovery Audit Program) that I described in last month’s newsletter is on

Coding/Billing Issues continued

hold. Protests by companies not chosen have forced the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to halt the activity of four new Recovery Audit Contractors (RACs). But you can bet they will be back.

Don’t forget your documentation!

LBJ News

By Peter Doyle, M.D.

- CompuRecord is active at LBJ – Please take the time to learn how to use the electronic anesthesia record. Also, pay attention to the timing of your electronic faculty documentation so as to avoid pre-signing any portion of your note. When you are in the faculty office, each computer has the ability to “see” each anesthesia record in each OR so that you can remotely check on how the patient is doing. Other software packages allow you to view previous anesthesia records and to perform database-type research on those previously stored records.
- To be fully integrated in the HCHD computer systems you must have a Logon/Password for the HCHD network, the HCHD EMR called EPIC, and for CompuRecord. Please make sure to set these up before working at LBJ (call 713-566-HELP for network and EPIC, and contact Sonny for CompuRecord).
- In December, we will run 8 ORs daily with additional block time for Dr. Adel Irani (vascular/thoracic) and Interventional Radiology. With the impending addition of new orthopedic faculty, they will also be able to expand their block time.

“CompuRecord is active at LBJ.”

Announcements

Cadaver Workshop

A cadaver airway and regional workshop is scheduled December 16th & 17th, 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the Simulation Center at the medical school.

ACGME Accreditation Site Visit Scheduled

An ACGME accreditation site visit has been scheduled for our department on March 18, 2009.

New Employee

Sharyl Fain was recently hired to take care of our faculty credentialing.

Christmas Party

Everyone is invited to our annual departmental Christmas Party which will be held at Dr. Nina Singh's home at 2503 Dry Bank Lane, Pearland, TX 77584. Be on the lookout for upcoming information on the date and time. Plan to come and have a good time.



Happy Thanksgiving



"When you rise in the morning, give thanks for the light, for your life, for your strength. Give thanks for your food and for the joy of living. If you see no reason to give thanks, the fault lies in yourself."

Tecumseh

Faculty of the Month

Glorimar Medina-Rivera, M.D. is our Faculty of the Month. "She is recommended as the faculty of the month for the excellent management of the faculty schedule and the constant leadership in resident and medical student issues at LBJ." Congratulations, Glorimar.

Resident of the Month

Christopher Strouse, M.D. is our resident of the month. "Chris is a model of dedication to patient care, leadership among the residents, and technical skill in his practice of anesthesia. It is a pleasure to have him as a chief resident." Congratulations, Chris.

Kickball Game Rescheduled



The kickball game between Faculty/ Administrative Staff & Residents is December 7 from 2:00 - 5:00 p.m. at the UT Rec Center softball field. A victory party will follow afterwards at Little Woodrows. Come and enjoy the fun.



Roberta Hines, M.D., Professor & Chair Yale University



Residents' Halloween Party