



Laying foundations for the future- establishing the EANS Young Neurosurgeons Network (EANS YNN)



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To the Editor,

Being a Young Neurosurgeon is more than just about one's age or the length of service in the field. It is about having the passion, the energy and dedication to enter the world of Neurosurgery; taking our first steps in training, learning the art and craft of surgery, and putting all that to good use for the benefit of our patients as a young specialist neurosurgeon. It is also about being part of a community where our skill, knowledge and creativity can bring us together with our peers. Then we can inspire but also get inspired; find mentors or act as one; exchange ideas and dreams, driving our specialty to the next level.

Neurosurgery is arguably still a 'young and maturing' specialty compared to other types of surgery, therefore it still cherishes the drive of its younger members to push it further into the unknown. We, the EANS Young Neurosurgeons' Committee (YNC) represent only a fraction of our generation's potential, something we humbly recognise as numerous peers across Europe have been interacting with us about guidance in their post-specialty training or help with their continued education, research and project ideas.

In the era of global communication, establishing a platform without borders where we can mutually support each other, discuss and disseminate ideas, exchange experience and feel included is a necessity (Nouri et al., 2022). Ironically, a significant amount of this drive can be lost due to lack of interdepartmental communication, absence of large multi-centre collaborations, and ultimately, a sense of community.

We also recognise that there has been a long-standing need for medical students and trainees in their youngest years of residency who are interested in pursuing a career in neurosurgery to be involved in clinical and research work (Park et al., 2022), become exposed to mentors and gain information about the opportunities in the field of this specialty. Evidence towards this are the numerous medical student organizations across the globe. Medical students have the potential to be extremely valuable for neurosurgical departments through their involvement in research projects and clinical duty (Medical student involvement in the, 2020). Additionally, recruiting residents from a preestablished student group, who already possess early knowledge and interest in the field is an invaluable advantage both for any department and trainee.

To meet this need, we have recently established the Young Neurosurgeons Network (YNN). This will be a community, held together by the YNC, that offers the opportunity of becoming a member of an organised network of peers. Members of the YNN can seek advice and guidance from more experienced members of the Network. They will have a platform where their ideas can be heard outside the borders of their departments and potentially find the support to make them a reality. This opens the road to collaborations on a larger scale, between people who may come from different training backgrounds but who share common vision and goals, whilst exchanging experience and cross fertilisation of ideas. Research projects and training activities under the EANS umbrella may now be focused on a network of members, guided by the YNC. This community can be a beating heart at the centre of EANS, and through it the future generations of members can grow, while building stronger professional bonds along the way.

It is important for all new or future members of the Neurosurgical community to have a reliable organisation to turn to when seeking guidance and opportunities about Neurosurgery. We believe the EANS is the ideal organisation in Europe and beyond where young peers can come together through such a common platform.

The YNN can hopefully bring forth faster dissemination of information about starting and ongoing projects; and with parallel streams of communication, it can foster collaborations and exchange of opportunities. Trainees and young specialists from across Europe, now have a common space to share and exchange ideas, work on them together and build a more unified European Neurosurgical community. Additionally, by belonging to such a community, all members will feel included in what is basically neurosurgery without borders, to the benefit of both professionals and patients.

It is our vision that the EANS Young Neurosurgeons' Committee will also play a pivotal role in the establishment of a European medical student network that can involve interested students into research collaborative projects and clinical work. Including medical students in the YNN is the first step towards laying down the foundation of a more efficient recruitment into our training programmes throughout Europe. By

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exposing future trainees to our values from early on, they will surely be able to surpass us and take European neurosurgery to higher levels, both from a scientific and from a societal point of view.

We welcome you all to join our network and to lay the steppingstones for the future.

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