

Certification and Career Opportunities in Emerging Neurologic Subspecialties

Neurology Subspecialization Emerges

In the beginning...

- Advances in neuroscience occurred at an explosive rate, giving birth to innovative technologies and treatments promising dramatic improvements in neurologic care
- Over 80%¹ of neurology residents were proceeding to subspecialty fellowships following graduation from their residency
- New subspecialties were emerging without comprehensive standards for training and practice
- Many new subspecialties did not qualify to be recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), American Board of Psychiatry & Neurology (ABPN), or Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)

REFERENCES

American Academy of Neurology, AAN Resident Survey: Final Report January 23, 2008, St. Paul: AAN; 2008.

Neurologic Subspecialization Emerges

2001

- American Academy of Neurology (AAN) developed the Commission on Subspecialty Certification comprised of five leading neurology organizations with a common interest of supporting and nurturing neurologic subspecialties
 - American Academy of Neurology
 - American Neurological Association
 - Association of University Professors of Neurology
 - Child Neurology Society
 - Professors of Child Neurology

2002

- These five founding “parent” organizations established the structure, function, and budget for a certifying and accrediting body for emerging subspecialties

2003

- United Council for Neurologic Subspecialties (UCNS) was incorporated as an independent 501(c)6 nonprofit organization



UCNS Vision:

To help small neurologic subspecialties develop credibility
and grow

UCNS Mission:

To promote high quality patient-centered care through
accreditation of training programs and certification of
physicians in neurologic subspecialties

UCNS Emerges

Three functions of UCNS

UCNS provides functions of ACGME and ABPN for small emerging neurologic subspecialties

- 1) Review, evaluate, and determine “recognition” of neurologic subspecialty applications
- 2) Provide accreditation and oversight of UCNS-recognized subspecialty training programs
- 3) Coordinate development and administration of certification examinations for UCNS-recognized subspecialties

UCNS Emerges

Founding “parent” organizations provide continued leadership and expertise to the UCNS Board and Councils

- Board of Directors govern the organization
 - Voting Members
 - 5 “parent” organization nominees + 4 UCNS subspecialty nominees
 - Nonvoting Members
 - 4 UCNS subspecialty nominees
 - Ex-officio Members
 - ABPN and ACGME liaisons + Executive Directors of “parent” organizations
- Councils oversee accreditation/certification and report to Board
 - Members nominated by the five “parent” organizations

UCNS Recognized Subspecialties

What is a “recognized” neurologic subspecialty?

- Subspecialty meets established criteria that recognizes it as a discrete and credible area of practice in neurology
- Physician experts have formally defined the core competencies required of physicians in the specialty and the required educational standards for training programs to produce competent fellows
- Subspecialty is supported and proposed for recognition by one or more sponsoring organization(s)

UCNS Accreditation

a measure of excellence

Accreditation demonstrates that a training program meets the high standards and rigorous peer-review process for a specific neurologic subspecialty.

UCNS Accredited Fellowship Programs

- Over 200 UCNS-accredited fellowship training programs in the U.S. and Canada
- Accreditation Council oversees the accreditation process and standards
- Subspecialty experts establish the program requirements including education standards
- Standards and processes are closely aligned with ACGME

UCNS Certification

a measure of expertise

Certification demonstrates the knowledge needed to provide quality patient care in a specific subspecialty area of medicine.

UCNS Certification

- Over 3,000 UCNS-certified Diplomates
- Certification Council oversees the certification process, policies, and examination standards
- Examination committees are appointed by each subspecialty to write the exam questions (200 questions/initial certification exam; 25 questions/annual continuous certification quizzes)
- Virtually proctored examinations are offered on a biennial basis
- Certification is continuous when annual requirements are met
- Standards and processes are closely aligned with ABPN

Current UCNS-Recognized Subspecialties

- **Autonomic Disorders**
- **Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry**
- **Clinical Neuromuscular Pathology**
- **Geriatric Neurology**
- **Headache Medicine**
- **Interventional Neurology**
- **Neurocritical Care**
- **Neuroimaging**
- **Neuro-oncology**

Planning Your Career Path

Considering a career or expanded training in a UCNS-recognized subspecialty?

Choose a UCNS-accredited fellowship training program

- UCNS-accredited programs assure consistent educational content that is developed and overseen with a peer-reviewed process
- Graduation from a UCNS-accredited training program is required to be eligible for certification in a UCNS subspecialty after a practice track period closes
- Find UCNS-accredited training programs at www.ucns.org

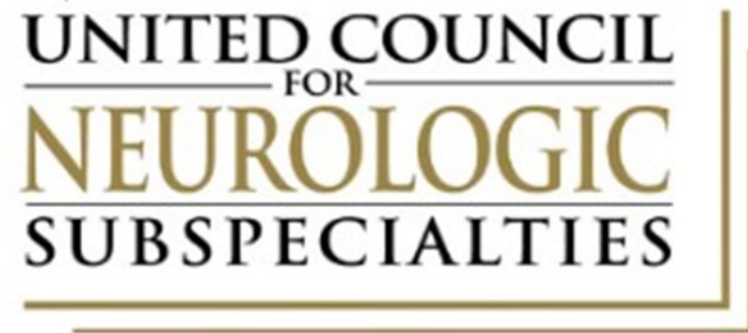
Seek subspecialty certification

- Validate your subspecialty expertise through certification
- Certification is required within 4 years of fellowship graduation
- Eligibility requirements vary by subspecialty and are listed at www.ucns.org

Planning Your Career Path

The Value of Subspecialty Certification

- Proven knowledge and skill in the subspecialty
- Sets yourself apart from others in the job search
- Acknowledged as an expert in the field by patients and peers
- Added qualifications and expertise for future career opportunities and advancements
- Demonstrated commitment to the field and subspecialty life-long learning



For more information go to:

www.ucns.org