European Association of Neurosurgical Societies

Assessment of Neurosurgical Departments and Training in Neurosurgery. Conclusions of a Symposium of the EANS in Brussels, 1981

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At the conclusion of a symposium on the assessment of neurosurgical departments and standards for training in Neurosurgery held in Brussels on January 30th and 31st 1981, it was decided that a document should be drawn up, summarizing the conclusions reached at that symposium. The text which follows is the work of Jean Brihaye, Mario Brock, Fabian Isamat, John Garfield and Robert Vigouroux. It should be stressed that the recommendations in the document should be regarded as minimum requirements.

Introduction

In January 1981 the EANS held a symposium in Brussels on the requirements for training in Neurosurgery, and on the facilities and organization in neurosurgical departments which were necessary if appropriate standards of training and service were to be maintained. Delegates from all the member societies attended the symposium at which there was extensive discussion, and divergent views were freely expressed and exchanged.

On that occasion, and at subsequent meetings of EANS committees, the representatives of several member societies requested that the EANS formulate a series of recommendations which could be regarded as guidelines for training in Neurosurgery and for the provision of effective neurosurgical departments. Indeed in some countries it is felt that such guidelines could be of considerable help to those who were attempting to ensure satisfactory standards of service and training in Neurosurgery, two aspects which are essentially inseparable.
The present conclusions and recommendations are to be regarded as a further development of the earlier reports of the EANS on Neurosurgical Training in Europe [Acta Neurochirurgica Wien (1976), 317–325; Acta Neurochirurgica 40 (1978), 335–344] and are based on the conclusions reached at the Symposium in Brussels in 1981.

Training

The following recommendations relate to the minimum requirements for training in basic Neurosurgery. This should be followed by a period of further training in a recognized department before a surgeon is ready to become a senior Neurosurgeon.

Duration

The minimum period of training in basic Neurosurgery should be six years after medical qualification and satisfaction of the legal requirements to practice Medicine in each country. This six years minimum period should include:

1 year in surgical fields other than Neurosurgery,
6 months in medical Neurology,
6 months in related disciplines such as Neuroradiology, Neuropathology, Intensive Care, etc.,
4 years in Clinical Neurosurgery.

Of the six years, four (and always the final two) should be spent in Europe.

Operative Experience

A log book of operation experience should be kept. During the six years at least the following major operations should have been done personally:

30 operations on intracranial tumours,
30 spinal operations,
30 operations for cranial trauma,
10 operations for hydrocephalus,
50 miscellaneous operations (e.g. congenital malformation, functional neurosurgery, peripheral nerve surgery, neurovascular surgery, etc.).

Publications

During the period of training in basic Neurosurgery at least two papers based on personal work in neurosurgical topics should be published.