

Association of Professors of Human and Medical Genetics
11th Annual Workshop
Wednesday, April 5, 2005
Business Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by the president of the APHMG, Dr. Bronya Keats. A moment of silence was held for Dr. Ted Thurmon, one of our colleagues, who recently passed away.

Secretary-Treasurer's Report (Jerry Feldman)

There is currently \$116,548.05 in the APHMG treasury (\$27,641.26 in a CD note at Paramount Bank and \$88,351.55 in a no-service fee checking account at Comerica Bank, both in Detroit, MI). At the last APHMG meeting there was \$79,363.35 in the APHMG treasury (\$27,065.62 in a CD note at Paramount Bank and \$52,287.73 in the checking account. But last year's meeting was in January, 2004, so these comparisons are not exactly year-year. On April 1, 2004, the total account values were \$72,408.95. No matter what the comparison dates are, the treasury is much stronger than 1 year ago.

The meeting this year is estimated to cost approximately \$26,700 with revenues of \$26,275.42. A separate meeting budget is available upon request. There are a total of 59 pre-registrants for the meeting (vs. 51 in 2004).

There were 82 paid members in the APHMG in 2004, (vs.83 in 2002. There are currently 59 paid members so far in 2005. The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences is a new member in 2005.

American College of Medical Genetics (Mike Watson, Executive Director)

Dr. Watson discussed a salary survey that is going to be conducted by the ACMG. He also discussed the HRSA newborn screening contract administrated by ACMG, with Dr. Watson as PI. They are developing management guidelines for the care of patients with metabolic disorders diagnosed through newborn screening, including confirmatory algorithms. He also discussed the National Coordinating Center for Genetics and Newborn Screening Regional Collaboratives, whose goals are to develop a national genetics network (but not CORN). Finally, he discussed the Maintenance of Certification as determined by the ABMG, and mentioned that the ACMG is developing a working group to fulfill a request by the ABMS to provide recommendations on how to deliver Expanded Maintenance of Certification to the genetics community.

American Society of Human Genetics (Joann Boughman, Executive Director)

Dr. Boughman discussed that ASHG is focusing on broader research issues, educational issues (a director of education for k-12 and undergraduate education is about to be hired) and career issues. ASHG is also focusing on public/privacy issues in genetics, especially related to genetic discrimination, stem cell research and the NIH budget.

American Board of Medical Genetics (Jacqueline Hecht):

Dr. Hecht discussed 4 main topics:

1. This is an examination year for ABMG; from now on the cycle will be every 2 years. The credentials committee has reviewed all the applications. Some issues that have arisen include a lack of breadth of cases, especially adult and cancer exposure, and the difficulty in finding a way for laboratory trainees to complete the requirement of 10 face-to-face patient encounters.
2. The Board is trying to simplify qualifications for foreign trainees, which is creating a significant amount of controversy.
3. The Board is investigating opportunities to create new training opportunities.
4. Maintenance of Certification.

American Board of Genetic Counselors/National Society of Genetic Counselors (Anne Greb)

Anne presented an update of ABGC issues related to the upcoming Board examination. There are 466 counselors taking this year's examination, which will be offered every 2 years. There are 29 programs (including 2 new ones). The role of genetic counselor training on an international level is being explored. A retreat is being held this summer to discuss the future role of genetic counselors. The ABGC has a new Executive Director (Beth Balkite).

National Coalition for Health Professional Education in Genetics (NCHPEG) (Mimi Blitzer)

Dr. Blitzer discussed new educational tools from NCHPEG, including a new CD-ROM on "Genetics and Common Disorders". NCHPEG also has received a grant to develop an educational program on genetics, race and health care for all health professionals. NCHPEG is developing a web-based module on genetics and bi-polar disorders and has a number of other educational documents available. Visit their website at www.nchpeg.org for additional information.

Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) (Bruce Korf, Mimi Blitzer)

Dr. Korf and Dr. Blitzer discussed the Medical Schools Objective Project (MSOP): Genetics Education Medical School Objectives Project. To download a copy of the report, go to <http://www.aamc.org/meded/msop/msop6.pdf>. The report provides specific recommendations on the attitudes, knowledge and skills that all graduating medical students must achieve, as well as providing recommendations for future educational needs in residency and practice. The LCME will be asking how genetics is taught in medical schools when they perform site visits. We discussed adding a link on our web site to this site.

CMSS/OPDA (Council of Medical Specialties Societies/Organization of Program Directors Associations) (Mira Irons)

Dr. Irons discussed that MOC is the major area of focus. It is essential that Societies and Colleges have a stake in developing MOC. Core curriculums are being developed for each specialty. The OPDA has developed a web-based curriculum for thoracic survey. The ACGME has developed duty hours programs. There are only 3-5% of schools who are not obeying this process. There are concerns that patient care and education have been compromised by these restrictions.

AAMC Chairs Meeting/Caucus of Basic Biomedical Science Chairs (Bronya Keats)

Dr. Keats discussed that the group met on 4/21-23, 2004. The primary issue was research advocacy and concerns about the NIH budget. The next meeting is 6/9-11/2005. The AAMC National Meeting of Medical School Basic Science Department Chairs is 10/7-9, 2005. Dr. Keats encouraged all current genetics chairs to consider attending.

The Nominating Committee (Bronya Keats, Feige Kaplan, Tony Wynshaw-Boris Jerry Feldman and Bruce Korf)

The Committee previously had a conference call and selected the following slate of candidates:

Councilor: Peter O'Connell. A motion was made and seconded to appoint Dr. O'Connell as a Councilor (2005-2008). The vote was unanimous in favor and Dr. O'Connell accepted.

Secretary Treasurer: Mira Irons. A motion was made and seconded to appoint Dr. Irons to replace Dr. Jerry Feldman in 2005, 1 year ahead of his elected term. This is because Dr. Feldman is the President-elect, and the Council and Membership felt it would be appropriate for a new Secretary-Treasurer to be elected to ensure a smooth financial transition. The vote was unanimous.

A suggestion was made to nominate 2 candidates for representatives instead of 1. This will be discussed by the Council.

Other Business:

A discussion was held regarding APHMG becoming a member of the Coalition for Genetic Fairness. The representatives voted in favor of joining. The secretary-treasurer will look into joining.

A discussion took place regarding changing the bylaws to add more than one representative per institution. The consensus was to not change the current bylaws.

A discussion took place regarding opportunities to fund various training initiatives, such as a training session for program directors. This will be explored.

A discussion of future APHMG meeting venues took place. We will likely return to the east coast (Florida) in 2005, though suggestions for a Caribbean or Mexican location were also entertained. Returning to Puerto Rico was also discussed. Dr. Keats will investigate various locales and present the information to the Council for a final decision.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gerald L. Feldman, MD, PhD, FACMG
Secretary-Treasurer, APHMG

Association of Professors of Human and Medical Genetics

11th Annual Workshop

April 6-8, 2005

Plenary Workshop Summary

Thursday, April 7, 2005

Plenary Session I

Title: Banbury Summit on Training of Physicians in Medical Genetics

Bruce Korf and Jerry Feldman, moderators

The Banbury Summit Meeting on Training of Physicians in Medical Genetics was held from October 20-22, 2004, attended by representatives of the major genetics professional societies with an interest in medical genetics. The meeting was convened to address the fact that only a small number of physicians are choosing to enter the field, with numbers of board certified physicians in genetics dwindling. Several recommendations were made at the meeting to increase the numbers of trainees. This session at the APHMG meeting was devoted to continuing the dialog about these issues, with an emphasis on the role the APHMG should play in carrying out these recommendations.

Dr. Korf summarized 3 major reasons why decreasing numbers of residents are entering the field: (1) the lack of financial security; (2) ambiguous identity; (3) lack of identity in medical school curricula. He reviewed the role of each of the major organizations in medical genetics education and discussed the current residency, which is primarily focused on training a “generalist geneticist.” It is clear, however, that there are many “supspecialists” in genetics, such as cancer genetics, neurogenetics, reproductive genetics, etc.

The tasks of the APHMG can be summarized as follows:

1. advocate for inclusion of genetics in medical school curricula
2. work with medical student career advising groups to publicize genetics as a career
3. seek NIH funding for training programs in collaboration with the ACMG
4. develop and share curricula models for medical genetics
5. encourage the formation of Departments of Medical Genetics

Lisa Baumbach from the University of Miami School of Medicine presented a new program entitled “Pathways in Medical Genetics throughout 4 years of medical school” organized through the John T Macdonald Foundation Center for Medical Genetics. The program provides an integrated approach to teaching medical genetics to medical students throughout their school years, instead of just as a year 1 course.

A VERY LIVELY discussion took place regarding the conclusions reached at the Banbury Summit, with various suggestions made, including:

1. the rejuvenation of a program director organization for medical genetics

2. surveying the quality of applications, including the number of filled v. unfilled positions and whether the available positions are funded, and, if so, how are they funded.
3. organization of a medical school course directors group
4. the need to collect real data on why genetics is not chosen as a career

Plenary Session II

Title: Assessing Competency in a Medical Genetics Residency Program

Steve Nestler, PhD and Pat Surdyk, PhD, moderators

Dr. Surdyk began with a presentation that was essentially “education 101” in which she discussed the key concepts involved in educational goals, learning objectives, instructional methods and methods of assessments. Stephen Nestler, ACGME Executive Director for the RRC Medical Genetics Committee, discussed the ways in which Medical Genetics Residencies may comply with accreditation requirements regarding educational goals and objectives, the general competencies, and evaluation. They provided each attendee with a Medical Genetics Curriculum Design and Development booklet, which included model goals and evaluation tools, for example, that have been developed specifically for medical genetics. This book will be invaluable to each program director as they develop their own methods to comply with the competency requirements. Dr. Nestler has given permission to reproduce the booklet. Every program director should have a copy.

One suggestion was to develop a list serve for medical genetics program directors. This has been suggested in the past, but limitations include how to establish such a group, who would referee the emails and who would maintain the site. The APHMG will survey the program directors to see if anyone is interested in setting up such a service.

Friday, April 8, 2005

Plenary Session III

Title: AAMC Perspective on Medical Research: Funding and Legislative Issues

Robert Desnick, moderator

Dr. Desnick discussed a AAMC task force which is charged with developing ways to retain and recruit junior faculty into clinical research, including a 1 year mentored clinical research training program at overseas NIH-funded sites.

The AAMC New Workforce Position is to expand by 15% existing medical school capacity in the next 10 years including expanding GME positions to accommodate US graduates.

David Moore, AAMC Senior Associate Vice President for Government Relations provided the group with the latest news from Washington on Federal research funding and legislative issues involving medical research. He reviewed the FY 2006 budget released by President Bush on February 7 and discussed the funding outlook for the National Institutes of Health and other programs important to academic medicine. These are difficult times, given that the budget deficit is tremendous and the amount budgeted to the NIH this year and next is projected to be less than in 2004 when adjusted for inflation. This will lead to a reduced number of grants, pressure for “downward negotiation” as cost per grant is squeezed, a limited increase for selected

training stipends and no funds for facilities. The political climate in Washington is making compromise difficult. He also described the major research issues likely to be considered by Congress this year and provide insight on the key players on Capitol Hill in the 109th Congress.

Plenary Session IV

Title: Advances in Stem Cell Research

Tony Wynshaw-Boris, moderator

In this session, the biology of human embryonic stem cells was discussed by Dr. Evan Snyder from the Burnham Institute and Dr. Fred Levine of UCSD School of Medicine and the Burnham Institute. Dr. Snyder discussed the difference between pluripotent (embryonic) and somatic (multipotent) stem cells and that stem cells are just one component in a series of intrinsic developmental programs. He discussed various scenarios on how best to exploit stem cell biology and what are the best cells to use, especially as it related to Proposition 71 in California (California Stem Cell Initiative) and the rest of the United States. Dr. Levine discussed current research involving the use of stem cells in the treatment of diabetes by promoting lineage-specific β -cell differentiation from embryonic stem cells.

Plenary Session V

Title: “Genetics Education for Medical Students – Jumping on the E-Learning Bandwagon”

Anne Greb and Lori Potocki, moderators

This session began with a presentation by Dr. Helene Hoffman, Assistant Dean of Educational Computing at the University of California, San Diego, who presented information related to on-line, web-based systems for medical student education. She showed the UCSD model, which includes coursework, resources, announcements, etc. Specific to genetics, on-line material included lecture material, handouts and on-line quizzes with feedback provided to the student. She discussed the creation of e-learning materials as a method of increasing medical genetics educational opportunities for medical students, including the technical and instructional design aspects of developing e-learning materials. The second part of the workshop was devoted to evaluating some of the current online medical genetics materials and how the APHMG and its members can collaborate in the creation of additional materials for undergraduate medical education. A group of attendees met afterwards to form a small working group to work towards that goal.

Respectfully submitted,

Gerald L. Feldman MD, PhD

Gerald L. Feldman, M.D., Ph.D., FACMG
Secretary-Treasurer, APHMG