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Methodology Special Section

Minutes

6/27/08

In attendance: Donald Penzien, PhD (chair); Tim Houle, PhD; Steven D. Bender DDS; William B. Young, MD; Andrew Hershey MD, PhD; Robert Nicholson, PhD; Ken Holroyd, PhD; Jason Roberts, PhD (for the AHS)

1. Meeting was called to order by Dr Penzien. Opening remarks focused on a review of the precourse "Evaluating the Evidence: Pragmatic Recommendations for Reviewing, Improving, and Utilizing the Headache Literature" that had been held the previous day.
 - a. Felt the quality of the course content was high, though the turnout was perhaps not quite what was expected.
 - b. The leaders of the pre-course will work to develop the course content into an article for the journal.
 - c. Dr Houle was asked to consider writing either an extended editorial or review article on statistical techniques. The article would address some of the most common errors he sees in his role as statistical consultant as well as suggesting techniques that papers submitted to Headache should consider.

Action Items:

- **Investigate all options for developing content delivered at the Precourse**
- **Dr Houle to assemble statistical techniques article**

2. Discussion turned to developing an annual course on how to perform reviews. The course could be taken on-site at a meeting or possibly self-paced on the web. It was suggested the course be a requirement for all Headache Fellows to undertake to learn skills on how to read, write and review a paper. Effectively, the course would provide tools for young researchers to *construct* and *deconstruct* a paper.
 - a. Suggested that a dry-run of a course to determine the best methods to deliver education aims could be run with Fellows at the 2008 Scottsdale meeting
 - b. To support any didactic teaching efforts, the course could contain an experiential element, enabling course participants to review sample papers and compare their efforts to those of members of the *Headache* editorial board.

Action Item:

- **Investigate the prospects of pulling Fellows together for a course in Scottsdale**
- **Develop fleshed out proposal of course**

- **Determine if participation in future courses could enable the awarding of CME.**
3. The group explored the prospects of developing a Guideline on reading, writing and reviewing research papers specific to headache medicine. The guideline could be published as a supplement in *Headache*. Possibly coupled with a statistical techniques guide from Dr Houle, it was felt the supplement could have the potential to be cited, or at the very least referred to by reviewers as authors attempt to construct (or reconstruct after peer review) their papers. Kept relatively general, the supplement might be of interest beyond researchers in headache medicine. The supplement would also serve as a consulting text for participants of a Construction/Deconstruction of a Manuscript course. The goal is ultimately provide tools to raise the quality of research published in the headache literature.

Action Item:

 - **In planning for an annual course for Fellows, the Methodology group would also work on developing the content of the supplement. The supplement would be published using the journal's non-commercial supplement allowance.**
 4. To ascertain what methodological issues need addressing the Methodology group felt it might be constructive to survey the general membership of AHS. The survey would establish potential knowledge gaps and perhaps determine what type of training members may wish to receive. It was noted that at the precourse it was suggested help on how to read (examine critically) a paper was proposed a subject for further coverage. The survey would be broad in scope focusing on the consumer of research as well as specifically conducting and writing up research.

Action Item:

 - **Don Penzien to follow up on prospects of surveying membership**
 5. Dr Young suggested there were serious flaws in the endpoints studied in headache medicine. A clinical endpoints article was proposed. Suggested that some of this work has been done in the general field of pain and the group agreed to identify people that could advise on this project. It was suggested headache medicine required a multi-dimensional scale.

Action Item:

 - **Don Penzien will perform a literature search to identify potential collaborators from the pain field**
 6. The meeting was brought to a close by Dr Penzien with agreement to investigate the possibility of developing and delivering training as quickly as possible.

Respectfully submitted by

Jason Roberts

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