



CANADIAN IOM NEWS

Official Newsletter of CANM

Message from the President



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It is my distinct honor to serve as president of the Canadian Association of Neurophysiological Monitoring. It was only six short years ago that the idea of forming a national association and hosting a scientific meeting was tossed around by a group of Toronto area IOM professionals. I was fortunate to be involved in this incredible initiative from the very beginning and in 2008 our dreams were realized with the formation of CANM and our inaugural IOM Symposium. Since then, CANM has hosted six widely successful scientific meetings, became incorporated in 2011, and began welcoming members in 2012. We are now on the brink of launching our IOM Certificate Program and the CANM Accreditation Examination. Together, these are the cornerstone of our strategic plan to elevate the professional standards of IOM in Canada through education and credentialing.

These initiatives will require a dedicated and passionate team and I am excited to begin working with the newly elected Executive Board. Please join me in welcoming Susan Morris, Gina Bastaldo, Marshall Wilkinson, Samantha Robertson, and Srinivas Bulusu. Together with the CANM Education and Accreditation Examination Committees, they are already hard at work delivering on CANM's strategic plans.

I would also like to take this opportunity to send my sincerest thanks and appreciation to the Founding Members of CANM – David Houlden, Jonathan Norton, Charles Dong, Laura Holmes, and Gina Bastaldo. They have dedicated countless hours to the development of CANM and its initiatives and have led us down the exciting path that we are now headed. Their individual contributions have certainly not gone unnoticed and their skills and knowledge in the field of IOM have helped build the strong foundation of CANM.

During my term as president, I intend to maintain the inclusive and collaborative culture that CANM has become known for. Diversity in educational backgrounds and professional experiences gives each one of us a unique voice and when those voices come together as a collective amazing things can be accomplished. Over the next couple of years, I will be soliciting your input and assistance on numerous occasions so that CANM can effectively represent your views and become the united voice for the profession in Canada, as defined in our vision statement. Working together, we will strive to improve IOM services and develop IOM professionals who will deliver the safest and most optimal patient care.

The year ahead is certainly poised to be a busy one so I encourage you to get involved and contribute as we move forward. I, along with the Executive Board, value your input and ideas and encourage you to share your opinions and suggestions with us. By becoming a member of CANM, you can help shape the future of IOM and provide vital support to our growing professional association.

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It is an enormous privilege to lead our association at a time when such transformational changes are underway. I thank you for your support and encouragement and I am confident that CANM will continue to make great strides in the advancement of the IOM profession. The future looks bright!

Laura M. Holmes, BScH SSP, CNIM
President, CANM
The Hospital for Sick Children
Toronto, Ontario

A night-time photograph of the Toronto skyline, featuring the CN Tower and the Rogers Centre, with their lights reflecting on the water in the foreground.

7TH ANNUAL CANM IOM *Symposium*

Toronto, ON | FALL 2014

DETAILS **COMING SOON**

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CANM Education UPDATE

In an earlier issue of this newsletter, I outlined CANM's plans to create an education program and a national accreditation exam in intraoperative neuromonitoring (IOM). If you were at our annual symposium in Ottawa this year, you would have heard some exciting new developments and realized that we are well beyond planning and are now full swing into the actualization phase of these goals. The biggest development since the last newsletter is that we are poised to enter into a partnership with a highly reputable Canadian educational institution. Since we have not officially inked the final details of our partnership agreement, I am not at liberty to publish the name of the institution – but stay tuned as it will be announced in our next CANM newsletter! Needless to say, the education committee is very excited about our new education partner and we are already hard at work on developing our combined certificate program in IOM.

As explained in the last update, the certificate program will be offered online and harness the latest and greatest teaching tools that are available through our new educational partner. We will offer 6 courses that range from introductory sciences to advanced courses in IOM. The courses will be specifically designed to take a new candidate with a background in science and develop their understanding of the principles and concepts involved in the professional practice of IOM. It should be noted that successful completion of the CANM certificate program is only the first step for those newly

entering the field of IOM. The next step for an inexperienced candidate would be the completion of a clinical training program under the direct supervision of a CANM accredited IOM professional. The final step to becoming a CANM accredited IOM practitioner will be the successful completion of our new CANM accreditation exam. A subcommittee of the CANM education committee is dedicated to the creation of this exam and it should be introduced in 2014.

The core competencies that we set out to cover in our certificate program include the following:

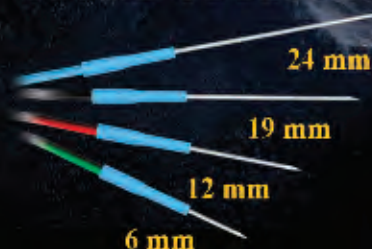
- Basic understanding of the principles of SSEPs, TcMEPs, EMG, BAERs, EEG
- Basic understanding of applied anatomy, physiology, and pathophysiology.
- Basic understanding of spine surgery, neurosurgery, and peripheral nerve surgery.
- The ability to set up a patient using appropriate modalities for the given surgery.
- The ability to record and display data in an interpretable way.
- Understanding of normal “signals” and the underlying pathways and neural structures.
- Understanding of deviation from normal “signals” and the array of possible causes.
- The effects of anesthesia on neuromonitoring signals.
- Effective communication and troubleshooting in the OR.

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We have been developing a list of courses that are designed to cover each of our core competencies and more. Each course will be 12 weeks in length and completion of all 6 courses in the certificate will take approximately 2 years. It has not been determined who will be eligible to take the CANM IOM certificate program such as what prerequisites might be put in place. However, the following criteria are being considered:

- Approval at the Discretion of CANM Board/Education Committee plus:
- Minimum of BSc
- OR; Currently employed in IOM
- OR; CANM Member (Full, International, Associate, Honorary)

I think it is fair to say that the goal is to make the certificate program most accessible to those who have the greatest chance of success and who will have the necessary educational and/or employment qualifications

to challenge the CANM accreditation exam – the final step to becoming a CANM accredited IOM practitioner in Canada.

As always, the CANM education committee invites all of our members to get involved in this education initiative. Our goal is to raise the bar on educational standards in intraoperative neuromonitoring in Canada and beyond and we need your help. So please send your questions, concerns, feedback and ideas to info@canm.ca – we'd love to hear from you!

Susan Morris, PhD

President Elect, CANM
Chair, CANM Education Committee
IWK Health Center
QEII Health Science Center
Assistant Professor (Surgery)
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia

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New 2013 CANM Members

FULL

Ekaterina Potapova – Toronto, ON
Karissa Thompson – Winnipeg, MB
Nicole Dinn – Toronto, ON
Lindsay Mazepa - Vancouver, BC

ASSOCIATE

Lucy Goudreau – Montreal, QC
Aleksandra Krajacic – Edmonton, AB
Gregory Krolczyk – Ottawa, ON

INTERNATIONAL

Awais Riaz – Salt Lake City, UT
David MacDonald – Saudi Arabia
Jeremy Bamford – Mandeville, LA
Tara Palmater - Glendale, CA
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Encouragement to CANM for the Education Initiative

What does the future hold for our wonderful field of intra-operative neurophysiological monitoring? The question is being asked a great deal in the United States. And the answer most certainly depends on who is going to be doing the monitoring.

It was my honour to be asked to speak at the 2013 annual CANM meeting in Ottawa this year. Your society is crackling with energy and it was a pleasure to observe the dedication of the attendees and speakers to the highest level of technical excellence. And I am honoured by the request to write an article discussing the American experience regarding the pursuit of IONM education and credentialing. Initially, I declined as I do not have full understanding of all education initiatives undertaken in the past. But, upon reflection, I realized it would be good to write some words of encouragement to the Canadian Society, especially those driving the CANM Education Initiative. The following observations are based on efforts I have been a part of over the past decade in the United States to increase the number of well-trained technologists in the field.

Unfortunate Observations

1. The chances of achieving any consensus drop significantly the more letters that the alphabet soup has. There is the alphabet soup of societies, such as ASET, ACNS, ASNM, AANEM, and AAN. The different educational degrees add more complexity to the mix, such as MD, PhD, AuD, MS, BS, AAS, and OJT. Yet more differentiation is in the range of credentials that might perform IONM, some examples being DABNM, R. EEG T, and CNIM. Finding consensus among such a diverse group is a challenge, even with the most sincere efforts of all individuals involved.
2. Larger groups tend toward paralysis due to over analysis. Large group consensus meetings seem to inevitably devolve into discussions of fine details



Brett Netherton (left) at the 6th Annual CANM IOM Symposium in Ottawa with Dr. Houlden (middle) and Samuel Strantzis (right)

that prevent making decisive moves. The result is that people walk away frustrated from lack of progress.

3. Students investigating education opportunities know little to nothing about the IONM career path. They know what physicians, nurses, nurse anesthetists, respiratory therapists, physical therapists, and scrub techs do. But they rarely have even heard of IONM practitioners, much less realize the career path exists.
4. In the US, there is not a defined career ladder. Even at the MD level, there is much room for improvement in qualification definition. And many clinicians at other levels of education experience frustration with the lack of a defined platform on which they can perform their practice.

Refreshing Observations

1. I regularly speak with US clinicians and almost

universally, they are excited about IONM. I believe we can thank the complexity of the central and peripheral nervous system. There is so much yet to discover about the nervous system relative to other areas of medicine. Neuroscience is so fascinating. Add a side order of operating room adrenaline, and you have a wonderful daily adventure.

2. I'm convinced that in the US, perceived rivalry between MDs, PhDs (all doctoral levels) and technologists for IONM practice territory is overblown. Technologists and PhDs seem to well recognize that MDs know how to diagnose and treat patients best. MDs and technologists alike highly respect the knowledge level that PhDs bring to the field. And MDs and PhDs all value the role of the well trained technologists. My experience is that this is virtually universal.

So, what is my message for CANM?

1. **Do not slow down. Move forward with your professional degree program at lightning speed.** You do not have the same type of disparate groups trying to come to consensus that we have in the United States. Obviously, there will be challenges,

but you are already far ahead of most American efforts so far.

2. **Set performance standards at the highest level.** When bright kids see education programs on par with physician's assistant programs, CRNA programs, Physical Therapy programs, etc. many will choose IONM because it's such an exciting field. Your educational programs will explode and attract quality personnel who want to advance the field.
3. **Your efforts WILL help establish the much needed career ladder definition.** Be the trendsetter for the rest of the world.
4. **If you can fully implement the advanced professional degree program with associated accreditation that Dr. Morris presented in Ottawa, your efforts will likely have great impact in the US.**

Best of luck and full speed ahead!

Brett Netherton, MS, FASNM, CNIM

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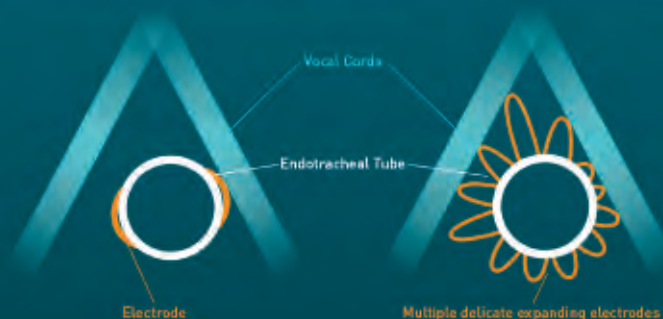


Figure A: A standard
laryngeal electrode with
flush mounted, static
electrodes that result in
very poor vocal cord contact

Figure B: The Neurosign
Lantern Laryngeal Electrode,
with a dynamic, flowering
electrode that dramatically
optimizes electrode contact

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Highlights from the 6th Annual CANM IOM Symposium

On October 4th and 5th, 2013, the 6th Annual CANM IOM Symposium was held in Ottawa at the beautiful Château Laurier Hotel. On behalf of the CANM executive board and the symposium organizing committee, I wish to thank all of our speakers and attendees who made this one of the most successful CANM meetings ever.

For the first time we included more in-depth case studies by clinical neurophysiologists who described the application, interpretation and troubleshooting of IONM in specific cases. Furthermore, CANM was privileged to introduce our very first European Keynote speaker, the prominent Dr. Francesco Sala. Focusing on the topic of “Evidence-Based Use of IOM,” Dr. Sala delivered a compelling and influential keynote address that became one of the most well-received speeches of the symposium.

2013 has been a pivotal year for the CANM Education Committee and committee Chair Dr. Susan Morris gave a comprehensive presentation detailing the progress of our Online Education Program and Certification Examination.

Needless to say, the success of the 6th Annual CANM IOM Symposium could not have been possible without the support of our corporate sponsors and the dedication of symposium committee members Dave Houlden, Chantal Turgeon, Srini Bulusu, Laura Holmes, and Tom Polis.

For every CANM symposium we strive to provide an interactive educational event that is second to none.



Left to right: CANM Former President Dr. Dave Houlden with keynote speaker Dr. Francesco Sala.

For all of those who attended this year's meeting we hope that you had an enlightening experience and we look forward to seeing you again for the 7th Annual CANM IOM Symposium in Toronto, Ontario – Autumn 2014.

Gina Bastaldo, BSc (Hons), CNIM
Communications Director, CANM
Editor-in-Chief, Canadian IOM News
2013 Symposium Organizing Committee
Toronto Western Hospital, University Health Network
Toronto, Ontario



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