American Board of Neurological Surgery Update

www.abns.org

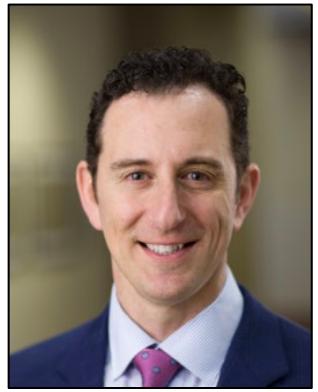
Mission

The broad aim of the AMERICAN BOARD OF NEUROLOGICAL SURGERY (ABNS) is **to encourage the study, improve the practice, elevate the standards, and advance the science of neurological surgery and thereby to serve the cause of public health.**

ABNS Leadership

Rick Boop, M.D.
Chair

Jack Knightly, M.D.
Vice-Chair

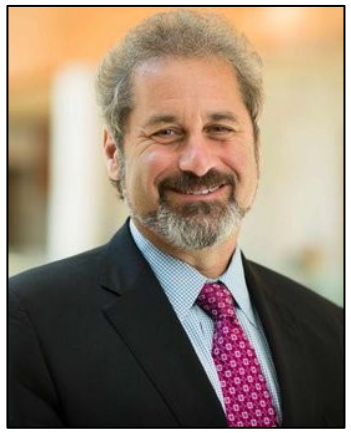


Elad Levy, M.D.
Vice-Chair

John Wilson, M.D.
Treasurer

Russell Lonser, M.D.
Secretary

ABNS Team



Fred Meyer, M.D.
Executive Director

Elizabeth (Betsy) Koehnen
Chief Administrative Officer

Susan Butterbaugh
Initial Certification
Administrator

Kari Bergmann
Residency Program
Coordinator

Leann Lepa
CAST Coordinator

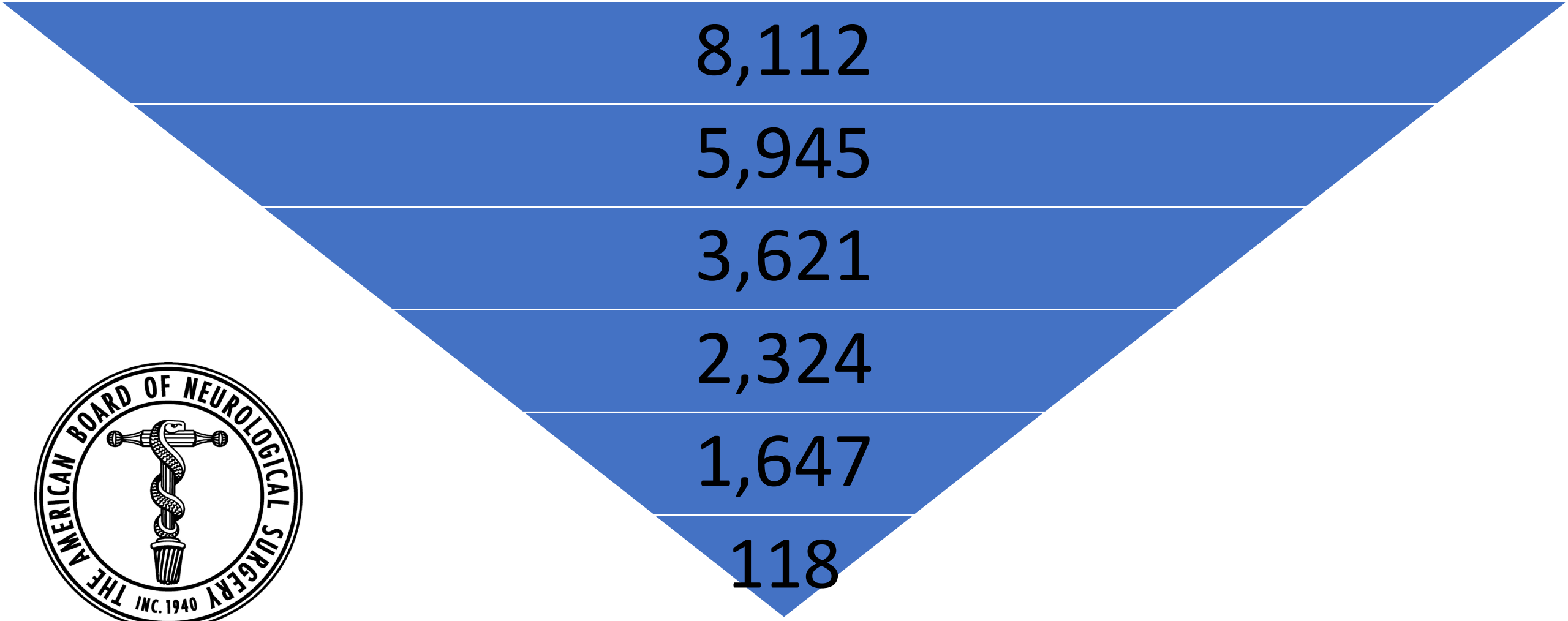
NOT PICTURED: Pam
Derstine, PhD
CAST Administrator

Kari Bollerman
ABPNS Administrator

Faith Backes
Credentialing Coordinator

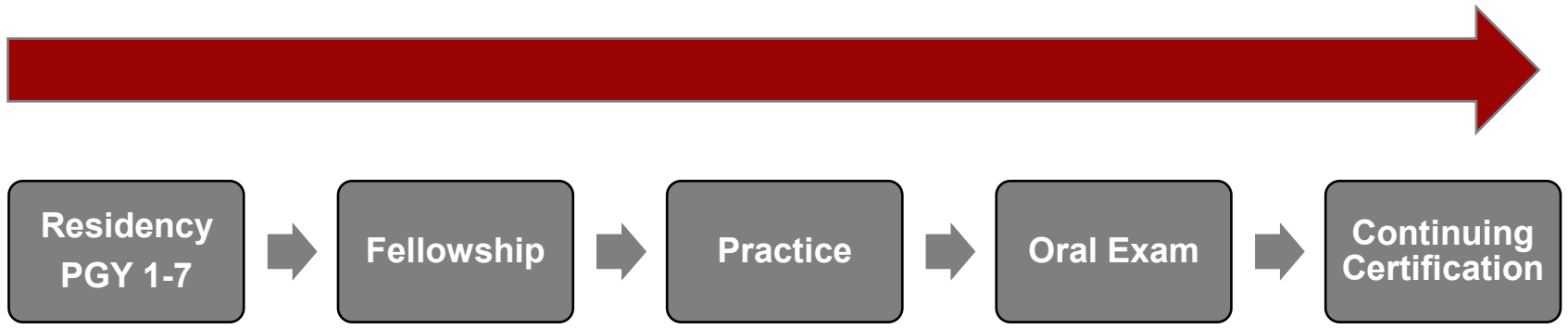
Scott Whitmire
IT Developer

ABNS by the numbers



Path to certification

Timeline to Certification



1. Pass Neuroanatomy exam for credit during PGY-2
2. Pass Primary Exam for Credit
3. Registration with ABNS

Optional

1. Application
2. POST Cases

Path to certification

Board Eligibility

As of July 1, 2021 residents must register before completion of residency training

As of July 1, 2021 entry of first 10 cases in ABNS POST (post residency/fellowship)

As of July 1, 2023 residents MUST pass the written examination for credit prior to Chief Resident Year (PGY-6 or PGY-7).

As of July 1, 2025 must pass neuroanatomy exam by PGY-2 completion and before taking primary examination for credit (for those taking primary exam after July 1, 2025).

Neuroanatomy exam

Neuroanatomy exam is required in PGY-2 and 100% correct to pass

Designed for clinical relevance

Bylaws require passing of examination before PGY-2 completion and before taking primary examination for credit (for those taking primary exam after July 1, 2025).

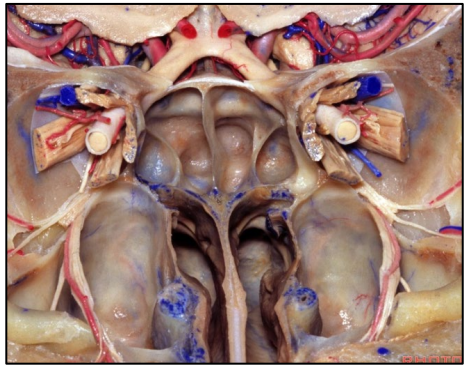
Thank you to AANS for sponsoring website used by all neurosurgical residents

Neuroanatomy exam

Mastery Exam
100 questions
Must pass with 100%
Up to 4 tries to pass

2023 Neuroanatomy Exam Results

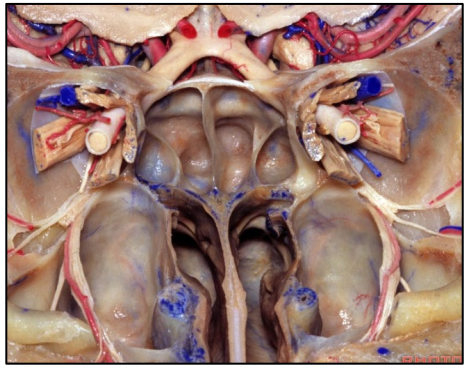
247 PGY 2s
136 have attempted it at least once
91 have mastered it
- 2 on the first attempt
- 38 on the second attempt
- 43 on the third attempt
- 8 on the fourth and final attempt



Neuroanatomy exam

2023 Neuroanatomy Exam Survey

Secure	**Four attempts, not open book**
Evolving	**Updated content, more like this**
Relevant	**Exam designed for clinical relevance.**
Highest	**Clinical Vignettes, videos**
Quality	**New content**
Continuous	**Evident by the changes**
Reassessment	



Primary exam

Secure	No technical/security issues.
Evolving	275 new questions vetted. Moving to Mastery Exam. Standard setting. Passing scores likely change annually
Relevant	Exam designed for clinical relevance.
Highest Quality	From 275 question vetted last year, 97 questions were accepted.
Continuous Reassessment	Rigorous quality control before and after exam. Rejected for factoid, not clinically relevant and poorly written. Post examination evaluation of question performance leads to elimination of another 5 to 15 questions.

Primary exam

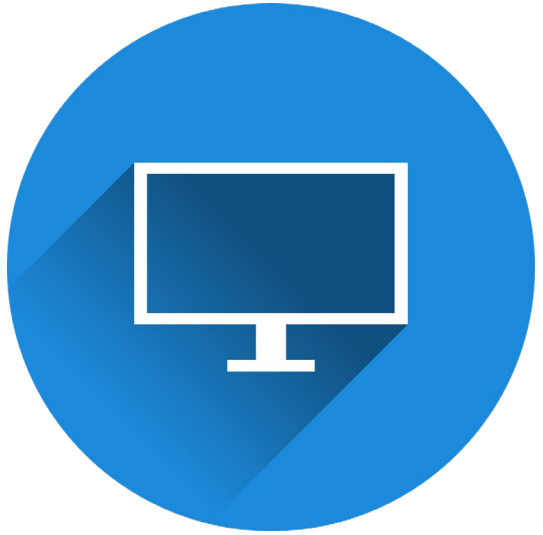
2023 Primary Exam Results

- 887 trainees that took exam
  - 248 (26%) for credit
  - 639 (74%) for self-assessment
- Fail rate
  - Reference group fail rate was 0.0%
  - Credit candidate fail rate was 2.4% (6 total)

*Minimum passing (percent correct) was 72%, supporting the move to mastery. A new standard setting exercise will be conducted in 2024.

Oral Examination

Offered twice per year; spring and fall
1 session that consists of 3 rotations
Examinees virtual
Directors on site
Examiners on site/virtual
Examiner development program



Oral Examination

Oral Examination Pass Rate

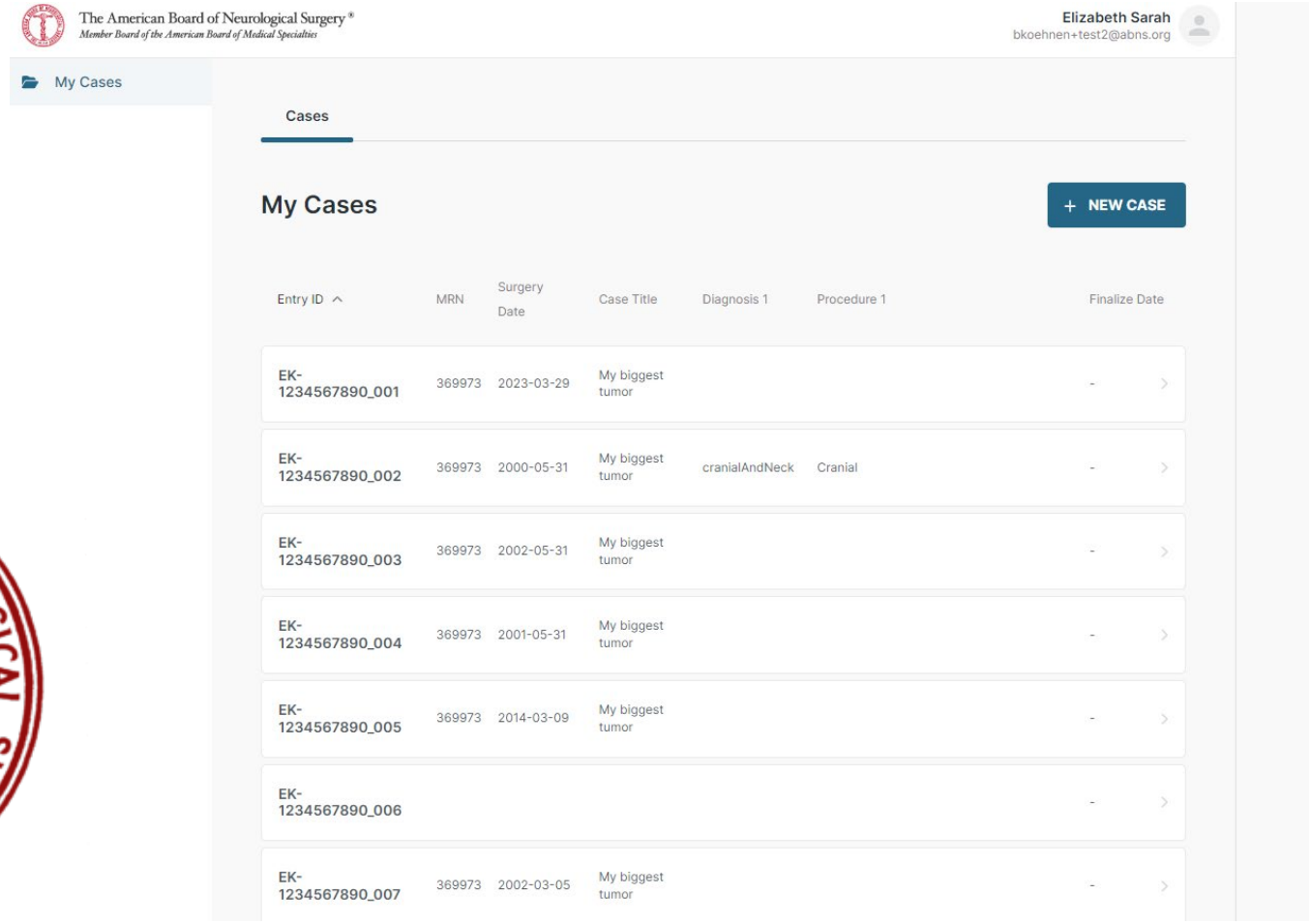
Exam date	Pass rate	Fail rate
Fall 2022	90.4%	9.6%
Spring 2022	90.8%	9.2%
Fall 2021	86.7%	13.3%
Spring 2021	86%	14%
Fall 2020 (first virtual exam)	84.9%	15.1%
Fall 2019	82.5%	17.5%
Spring 2019	81.8%	18.2%
Fall 2018	85.1%	14.9%
Spring 2018	83%	17%
Fall 2017	80.6%	19.4%

ABNS POST

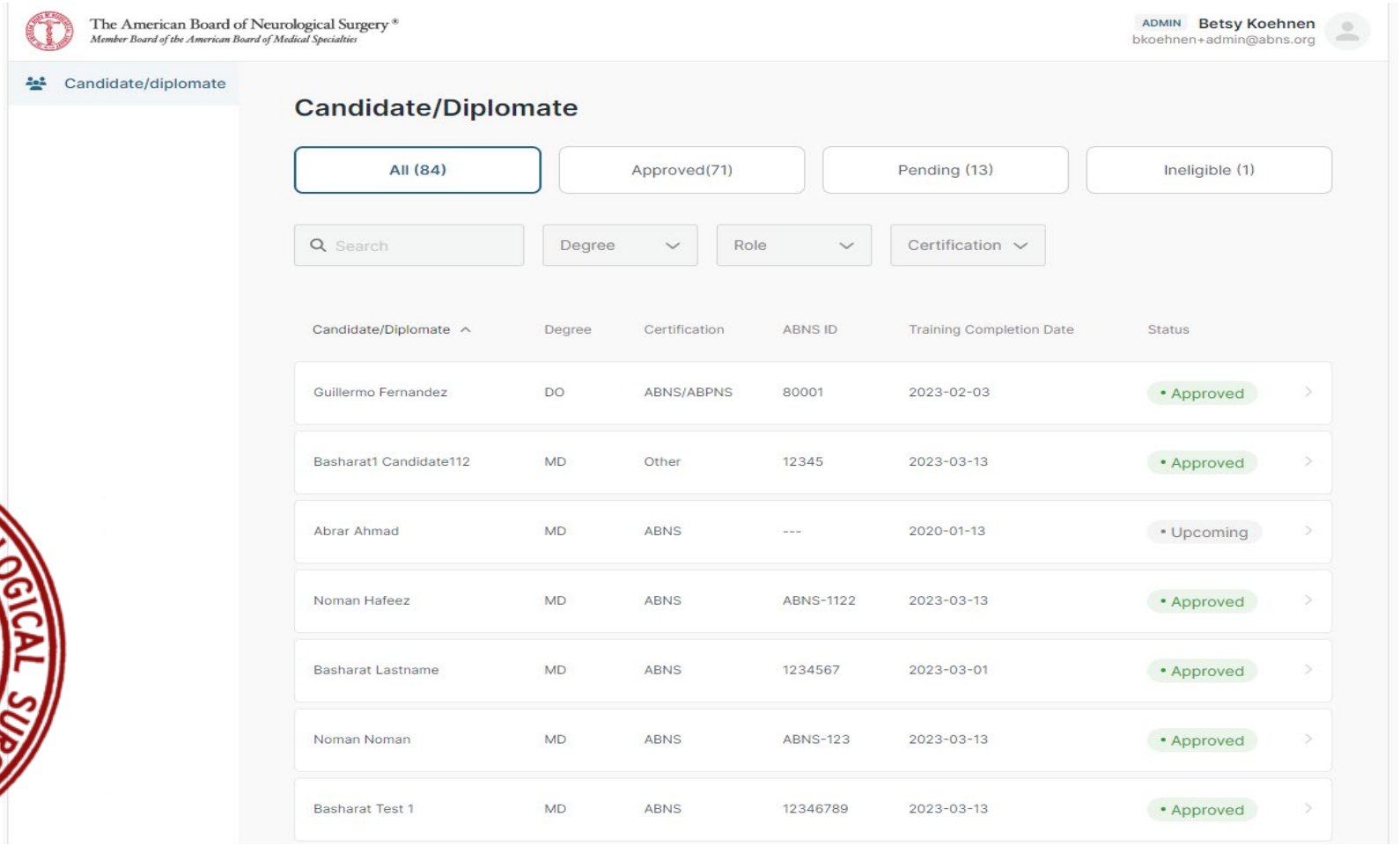
Practice and Outcomes of Surgical Therapies

- UAT from 5/15 to 5/19
- UAT feedback implementation between 5/15 to 5/19
- Further re-test by ABNS from 5/22 to 5/24
- UAT sign-off by ABNS on 5/26
- Go-live can be targeted on 6/2
    - Candidate onboarding
    - Candidate case log creation
    - Admin login
    - Admin approving the account
    - Email notification to candidate
    - UAT -1 Feedback: 8 items implemented/delivered
    - Admin to view case log (work in progress)
    - Image upload optional (work in progress)
    - Brain tumor issue
    - Treatments for Chiropractic Therapy and number of days for PT
    - CPT codes (2023)
    - The IDs are: 30, 49, 53, 54, 57, 80, 87, 92, 93, 94, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 109, and 111.

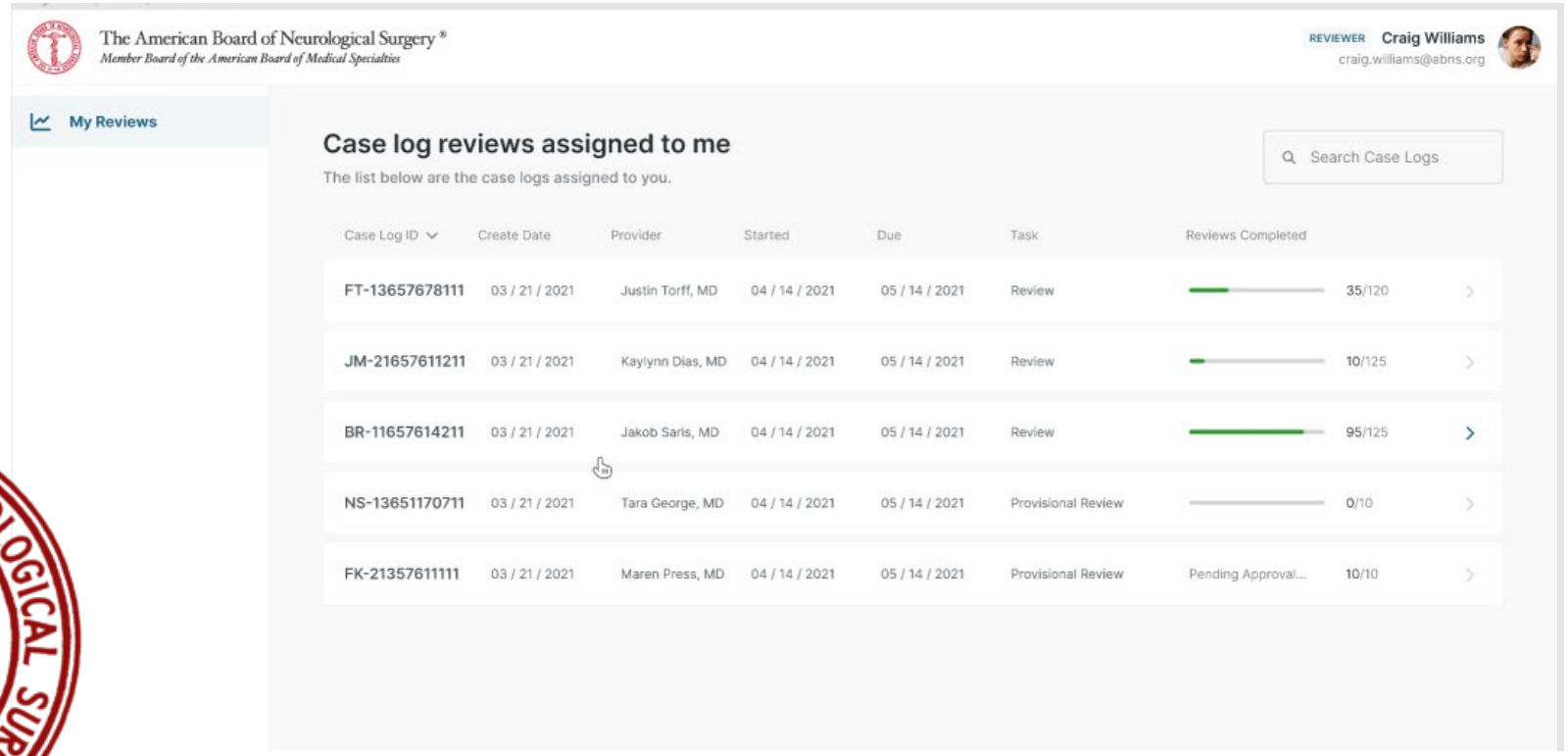
Candidate Portal (iqvia.com)



Admin Portal (iqvia.com)



Reviewer Dashboard



ABNS POST

Practice and
Outcomes of
Surgical
Therapies

Data collected

- Candidate
- NPI number
- Training program
- Written boards scores
- Fellowship/Subspecialty
- Practice type
- Practice location
- Case (POST) content (including imaging)
- Oral boards results

ABNS POST

Practice and
Outcomes of
Surgical
Therapies

Potential analytics

- Diplomate demographic trends
- Training-related
- Quality-related
- Subspecialty-related
- Management improvement
- POST-related improvements

ABNS POST

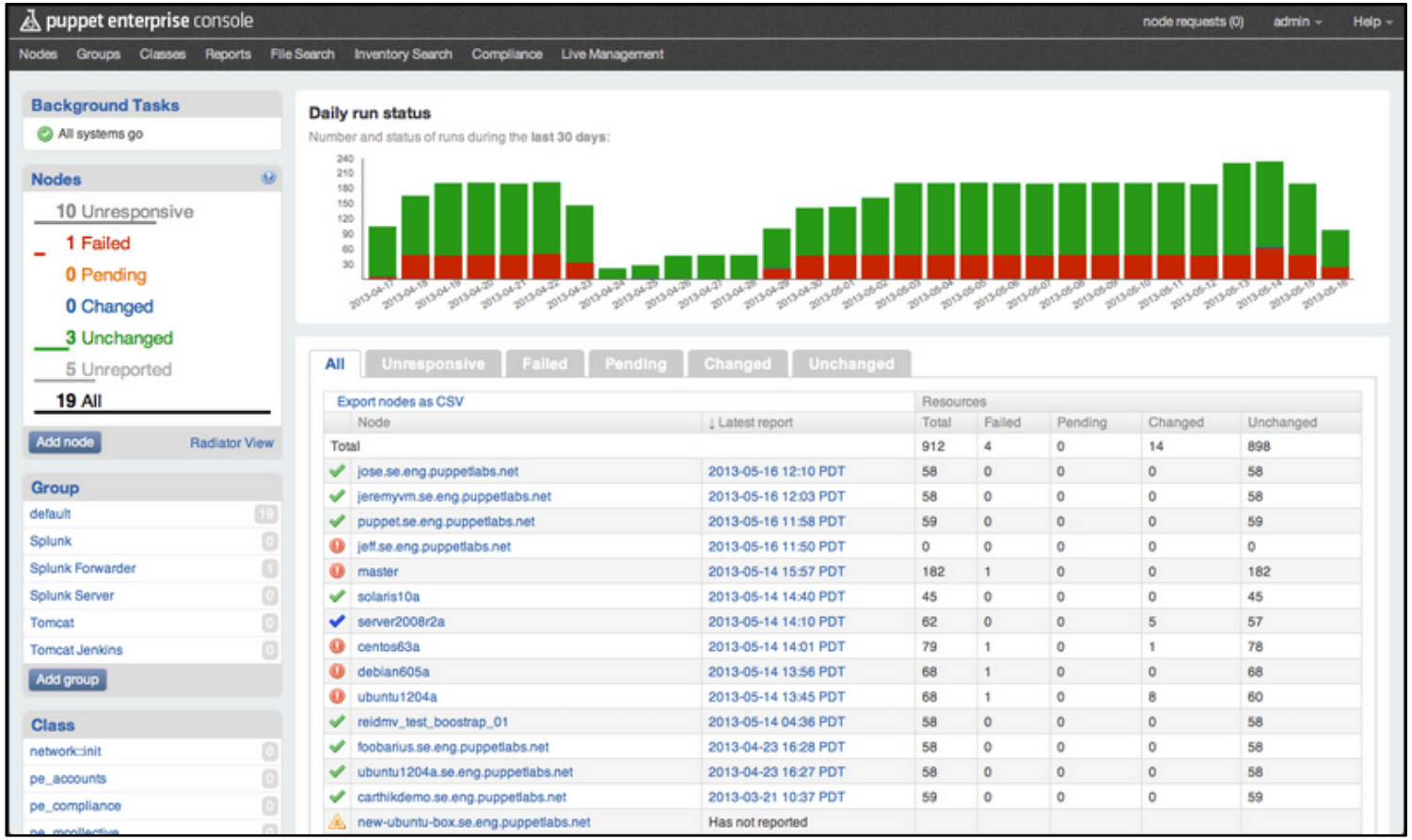
Practice and Outcomes of Surgical Therapies

Training Analytics

Assess effectiveness of training

- Define patterns related to training (surgical indications, coding errors, complication rates, oral board pass).
- Match case logs with clinical and board outcome

Residency Training Data Board



Data assessment

- NPI number
- Primary Exam
- Oral Exam
  - Passing rate
  - Failure subtypes
- Case Type
- Practice Demographics
  - Practice type
  - Subspeciality
- Complications, reoperations, objectives met, death (6 months) and unmet objectives
- Concern issues by reviewers
- ACGME training data (case mix and volume)
- Continuing certification data

Recognized Focused Practice

RFPs Status and Updates

Pediatric RFP	193
NCC RFP	20
CNS Endo	216

Opportunity to convert NCC and ENDO CAST certificates ends this year.

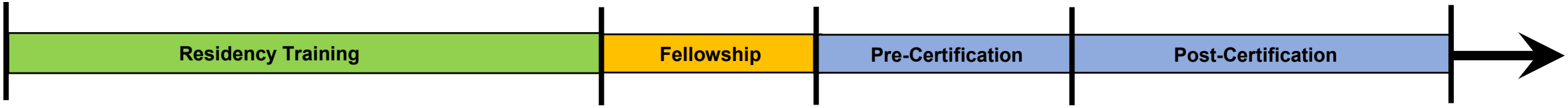
Continuing Certification

Loss of certification

Year	MOC/CC	Other
2016	3	3
2017	1	0
2018	2	1
2019	2	1
2020	2	2
2021	12	3
2022	36	0
2023	20	0

The “Continuum”

Residency Training Programs
Fellowship Training Programs
Residency Review Committee
Congress of Neurological Surgeons
American Association of Neurological Surgeons
Society of Neurological Surgeons
CAST
ACGME



Primary Exam Scores
Case Data

Case Data

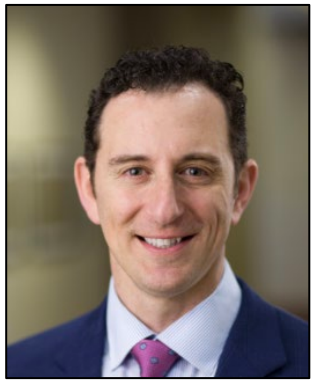
POST Data
Geographic
Oral Board
NPI

POST Data
Other (CME)
NPI

Time (Years)

Certification pathway for graduates of non-ACGME programs who are exceptional neurosurgical faculty at ACGME-accredited neurosurgery residency programs.

Doug Kondziolka



Elad Levy

THE AMERICAN BOARD OF NEUROLOGICAL SURGERY INC. 1940

Background

Multi-year approach involving

- **Current and past directors**
- **Department chairs**
- **Multiple iterations**
- **Meet/discussed with other boards**
  - **ABS, ABO-HNS, ABO, ABTS, ABOG**
  - **Non-surgical boards**

Bylaw 4.10

“the applicant’s training, practice and professional stature leave no doubt as to their exceptional qualifications, the Board may grant permission for the applicant to be examined for certification.”

Pathway

- Must pass Primary Examination
- Must provide a minimum of 125 cases in POST over 18 months and obtain approval to sit for Oral Examination
- Must pass all 3 sections of Oral Examination

ABNS Update

Conclusions

- Relevance to profession and public safety
- Evolving
- Standardization
- Data analytics
- Quality and reassessment

Questions?