Compensation of Functional Neurosurgeons, A National Survey

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Introduction

Physician compensation models continue to evolve. Many functional neurosurgical cases reimburse physicians less well than those of many other neurosurgical subspecialties. Most available compensation surveys (MGMA, NERVES, AMGA) do not include significant numbers of neurosurgeons who subspecialize in functional neurosurgery. To fill in this knowledge gap, we conducted a national survey of functional neurosurgeons.

Methods

An invitation to the internet-based survey was emailed to United States members of the American Society of Stereotactic and Functional Neurosurgery and the North American Neuromodulation Society. Questions included basic demographic information as well as queries about case mix and case numbers, work relative value unit (wRVU) production, total compensation, compensation models, and compensation incentives.

Results

Invitations were sent to 453 individuals and 50 responses were received. Respondents were evenly distributed geographically. 86% of respondents worked in an academic medical center (evenly splt between hospital employed and not). 80% had been in practice 15 years or fewer. Functional neurosurgery cases represented over half of total case load for 56%. Average amount of protected research time was 11%. Mean total number of cases per year was 306. The mean wRVU per year was 9483. For many respondents with the highest wRVU numbers, functional neurosurgery represented less than half of total cases. Almost half were compensated on a salary+incentive basis without an academic productivity incentive as part of their compensation. For over half, compensation was somewhat or much less than their partners. 70% did not have a non-clinical compensation component. Total compensation amounts varied widely.

Conclusions

This survey provides the largest and most complete dataset on compensation for functional neurosurgeons. This may be compared to existing larger surveys such as the NERVES survey. Functional neurosurgeons may use

Learning Objectives

By the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

1. understand the compensation models for functional neurosurgery

2. understand the average clinical productivity of functional neurosurgeons

References