

Advancing interest in neurological surgery and allied subjects

WWW.NSANEUROSURGEONS.ORG

Registration is open for NSA's Annual Conference July 8-10

NSA President Donald Tyler, MD, and NSA staff are busy planning this year's conference. We will have two special guest speakers and eight 30-minute sessions for a total instruction time of six hours.

As usual, we will begin with a family-friendly welcome reception on Friday evening, July 8. We'll also gather on Saturday evening for a family dinner party. More details will be available soon at www.nsaneurosurgeons.com.

Support from industry partners is important to NSA. Please share our *exhibitor prospectus* with vendors that come to your office.

Rooms at the Hilton Sandestin begin at \$305 per night. Make your hotel reservations by calling (850) 267-9500 and reference room block code NEU. NOTE: The NSA room block closes June 8, but we expect rooms to sell out early. **Reserve your room today!**

Loyola neurosurgeon examines issue of hydrocephalus in Uganda

www.news-medical.net

In an editorial in December 2015 issue of the journal *World Neurosurgery*, Loyola University Medical center neurosurgeon Vikram Prabhu, MD, examines the issue of hydrocephalus in Uganda. Dr. Prabhu is a professor in the Department of Neurological Surgery of Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine.

Hydrocephalus mostly affects children, although adults also can get hydrocephalus. Conventional treatment involves running a shunt from the brain to the abdomen and using a valve to regulate fluid draining from the brain. But shunts are expensive and complex systems that require frequent checks and may be prone to failure. The system is difficult even in developed countries. In developing countries, which lack the infrastructure to deal with inevitable infections and malfunctions, it is practically impossible to safely monitor and care for these devices.

Neurosurgeon Benjamin Warf, MD, developed a one-time, minimally-invasive endoscopic procedure that is safe, effective and easy to implement. Dr. Warf established a center in Uganda that has provided neurosurgical care to scores of children with hydrocephalus, saving many lives.

Healthcare in the developing world often is dictated by cost. The Warf procedure is an example of how sparse resources "have spurred innovative physicians to pioneer efforts that provide health care in a parsimonious manner ..." Dr. Prabhu wrote. "We have much to learn from them, and their innovations may fuel cost-effective strategies back home."

[Read more](#)

BCBS to cover telemedicine services

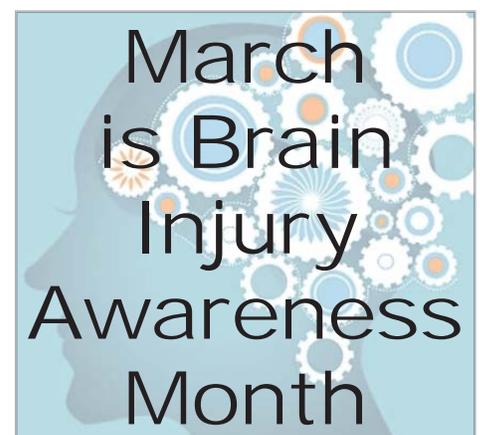
Birmingham Business Journal

To meet the growing demand for health care services in rural parts of the state, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama began providing coverage for telemedicine as of Dec. 1, 2015.

The new coverage is geared toward telemedicine services within five categories of speciality care including cardiological conditions, behavioral health, dermatologic conditions, infectious disease and neurologic diseases.

"We are proud to support telemedicine because we want our members to have enhanced access to quality healthcare wherever they are in Alabama. With the innovative technology available today, we are now able to do just that," said Doug McIntyre, vice president of network operations at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama.

Read the full [Telemedicine Policy](#)



News Briefs

Scientists develop wireless brain sensors

A team of neurosurgeons and engineers has developed wireless brain sensors that monitor intracranial pressure and temperature and then are absorbed by the body, negating the need for surgery to remove the devices.

Such implants, developed by scientists at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis and engineers at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, potentially could be used to monitor patients with traumatic brain injuries, but the researchers believe they can build similar absorbable sensors to monitor activity in organ systems throughout the body. Their findings are published online Jan. 18 in the journal *Nature*.



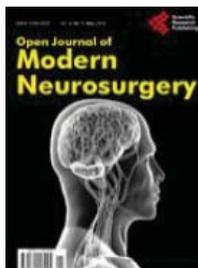
The devices commonly used today are based on technology from the 1980s. They're large, they're unwieldy, and they have wires that connect to monitors in the intensive care unit. They give accurate readings, and they help, but there are ways to make them better.

[Read more](#)

Source: Washington University School of Medicine

Neurosurgical journals with open access

An increasing number of neurosurgical journals with open access are available online. The most recent, *Open Journal of Modern Neurosurgery*, publishes English original research studies, reviews and case reports in all aspects of modern neurosurgery.



Find a list of open access neurosurgical journals at www.neurosurgic.com.

Medical Association of the State of Alabama offers NSA members a Prescription Assistance Program for patients

Patients who need help with the cost of prescription medications can now get a free prescription assistance card made available by the state's largest association of physicians.

The Medical Association of the State of Alabama is promoting the Alabama Rx Card, a discount drug card free to Alabama residents. The discount card generates savings of up to 75 percent on prescription drugs at hundreds of participating pharmacies statewide.

The discount card helps uninsured and under-insured residents afford prescription medications, which has already saved Alabama residents more than \$25 million since inception.



"Alabama's physicians are committed to our patients' health and well-being, so helping patients get the medications they need is a priority. Patients can't get well if they can't get their prescriptions," said Medical Association President Buddy Smith Jr., MD, of Lineville.

The Alabama Rx Card discounts will benefit patients whose health insurance coverage does not include prescription benefits, which is common in many health savings accounts and high deductible health plans. Those who do have prescription coverage with their health insurance can use this program to get discounts on medications that are not covered by their insurance plan. Patients will have the ability to go to the Alabama Rx Card to see prices for their particular prescriptions and determine the level of discount they might receive.

All are eligible regardless of their current prescription coverage benefits.

Alabama residents can print a free card, search drug pricing, and locate participating pharmacies at www.alabamarxcard.com.

It's time to renew your membership dues for 2016.
[Print a 2016 Statement.](#)

NSA News & Notes

Neurosurgical Society of Alabama

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The neurosurgical society of Alabama is organized to advance the interest in neurological surgery and allied subjects and to act as a representative for its members at the discretion of the membership.

The articles contained in NSA News & Notes are meant to provoke thought and comment and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the members, Executive Council or staff of the Neurosurgical Society of Alabama. Comments and letters to the editor are welcome.