American Board of Otolaryngology Committees

The American Board of Otolaryngology consists of eighteen Directors who meet twice a year, once after the Oral Exams and once in the fall. The ABOto makes decisions and sets policy through a variety of committees composed of Directors which develop proposals for the full board to review on the last day of the meeting. In addition, some of the committees also meet by conference call throughout the year.

The committees include:

- Exam/Group Leaders
- Examiner Selection
- Maintenance of Certification
- Credentials and Ethics
- Finance
- Information and Liaison
- Nominating
- Strategic Planning
- Education

Education Council

The Education Committee of the Board addresses issues related to the requirements and standards for resident education and training, which lead to eligibility for Board certification. The Education Council is a larger group which addresses the same issues, and in addition to the Board’s Education Committee, also incorporates other educational leadership from the specialty. Specifically, the Council membership includes the Chair of the Otolaryngology RRC, two representatives from the Society of University Otolaryngologists, and two representatives from the Association of Academic Departments of Otolaryngology; the President of the Otolaryngology Program Directors Organization is also invited to attend. The Council meets twice a year, in conjunction with the SUO/AADO/OPDO meeting in the Fall, and the annual Board meeting and oral examinations in Chicago in the Spring.

The Education Council was created many years ago by Dr. Byron Bailey, and, working with the Otolaryngology RRC, it has overseen some evolutions in the residency training program, including the change in training duration from six to five years, the transfer of education control of the PGY-1 year from General Surgery to Otolaryngology, and the development of specific rotation requirements for that year.
In addition, the Education Council saw the need for a comprehensive report summarizing the educational content of residency training – from basic mechanisms of disease to medical and surgical treatment – and which would address all aspects of residency training from didactic curriculum to teaching in the operating room. Working with many experts across the specialty and led by Dr. Bruce Gantz, the Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery Core Curriculum was created in 2007, and can be found on the ABOTO’s website.

The Council also recognized the need for more standardized methods to assess surgical competence during training. Dr. Paul Lambert led a group which studied best practices from other surgical specialties, and the group developed a pilot assessment tool which could be used for many different procedures at different levels of training. This tool was subsequently used for data collection by many programs around the country, with reports back to the Council. This has served as a precursor to “milestone” assessment, which has recently become a major push from the ACGME across all residency training programs.

Currently, the Council is working closely with the Milestone Task Force, which is charged with developing the Milestone groups and criteria which will be used by residency training programs to assess several aspects of the clinical competencies. This important initiative has the possibility of being a transformational change in both the evaluation of individual residents and the accreditation of training programs, and input from the Council has been used along the way toward development. The Council is also working with the Otolaryngology Program Directors Organization on a potential project to improve the screening process for residency applicants, with a goal toward identifying (and selecting out) applicants who are not an ideal fit for the specialty.

In summary, the Education Council provides a critical forum where leadership representing the Board, Department Chairs, Program Directors, the RRC, and academic faculty can regularly meet and address issues around training and education of our residents, who represent the future of our specialty.

Michael G. Stewart, MD, MPH
Chair, Education Council

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS? PLEASE CALL THE AMERICAN BOARD OF OTOLARYNGOLOGY OR VISIT US AT WWW.ABOTO.ORG

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