SNS Policy on External Medical Student Rotations during the COVID-19 pandemic

In light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the usual scheduling of Sub-internships, Acting-internships, and away medical school rotations in neurosurgery (Sub-Is) pose a challenge. Safety, education, and equity for our students, our institutions, our patients, and our communities are paramount in the following decisions.

External rotations for medical students are integral to the application process for:
1. Student experience in the depth and breadth of neurological surgery prior to committing to a specialty.
2. Education in preparation for internship.
3. Letters of recommendation to assist programs in the evaluation of medical student applicants.

Recommendations for external rotations for the 2021-2022 recruitment cycle have been made by the AAMC. In order to ensure a safe and equitable experience for all students and all programs during this pandemic, the specialty of neurological surgery will abide by these recommendations, as described below:

1. Each neurosurgery applicant will be limited to one (1) external neurosurgery rotation, which must start on or after August 1, 2021.

2. Given the importance of the applicant experience in neurological surgery prior to committing to a career path, each student should do 1-2 rotations of neurological surgery at their home institution (minimum of 4 weeks).
   a. Students without a home program should perform 2 rotations of neurological surgery at the closest ACGME accredited program (adopted home program), or 1 rotation at the “adopted home program” and 1 external rotation.
   b. Virtual rotations are not a substitution for in-person neurosurgical rotations.
   c. The SNS encourages students to gain a diversity of experience and education through a broad spectrum of subspecialty medical and surgical rotations in preparation for residency.

3. Direction regarding interviews and letters of recommendation will be forthcoming.

The SNS will continue to closely monitor the situation and issue new guidance as necessary.