



# SANS NEWSLETTER

Our Reader is our Leader

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News & Events

السعودية  
نحو الفضاء  
SAUDI TOWARDS SPACE



4

We are excited to announce that we are now entering our 4th year of delivering local neurosurgical news and insights to you through our newsletter.



# ISSUE MESSAGE

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## Dear readers,

It gives us great pleasure to present Issue 2 of Volume 2023 of the SANS Newsletter!

This issue begins with an interesting article by Dr. Abdulrahman Sabbagh on the idea of starting a Saudi Journal of Neurosurgery.

In this issue, we reviewed the programme of our last conference - the 17th Annual Meeting of SANS - which was held in Jeddah from 4-6 March 2023. Professor Abdulhakim Jamjoom shares with us his valuable insights on events like annual meetings.

We also have an exclusive interview with an experienced neurosurgeon who shares his insights and experience in the field. You will hear from him how he successfully overcame the challenges of neurosurgery.

In addition, we have covered some news from our community to keep you in the loop.

Finally, we would like to thank you for your feedback and comments. We are always looking for ways to improve our content and make our newsletter even more valuable to you.

We look forward to hearing your thoughts!



# NEUROSURGERY IN SAUDI ARABIA

By Dr. Abdulrahman Jafar Sabbagh

King Abdulaziz University Hospital | KAUH  
Jeddah, Saudi Arabia



## Harnessing ChatGPT-4 and Similar AI Chatbots in Neurosurgery: Opportunities, Challenges, and a Stepwise Approach

Artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, deep learning and neural networks have revolutionised several industries, including healthcare and medical education. ChatGPT-4, a sophisticated AI chatbot, is an example of this revolution, processing vast amounts of information that it has

trained using large datasets from the internet, but which still need to be assessed by humans [1]. The impressive growth of AI is evident in a study by Kung et al. (2023), which evaluated ChatGPT's performance on the United States Medical Licensing Exam (USMLE) [2].

The study found that ChatGPT performed at or near passing levels on all three exams without any special training and showed high levels of concordance and insight in its explanations.

*A study found that ChatGPT showed high levels of concordance and insight in its explanations.*

# ChatGPT-4 and Similar AI Chatbots in Neurosurgery

## OPPORTUNITIES AND BENEFITS

AI chatbots such as ChatGPT-4 offer numerous opportunities in neurosurgery, such as:

- Processing complex medical information and generating human-like responses.
- Assisting in writing case reports, clinical notes, and research manuscripts [3].
- Facilitating personalised medicine through access to rich information.
- Encouraging innovative thinking and development of new ideas.

## CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

AI chatbots, however, have some limitations and challenges, such as:

- Generating inaccurate or misleading information because they are unable to distinguish between credible and non-credible data sources.
- They generate artificial hallucinations, i.e. fake

references and fictitious information, raising concerns about the reliability of AI-generated content in scientific texts [3].

There are alternative AI solutions that facilitate factual referencing, such as Scite Assistant. It is imperative to avoid relying on ChatGPT for academic research, as it tends to generate fictitious citations to non-existent papers. Instead, consider Scite Assistant, an AI-driven application specifically designed to meet the needs of researchers.

## ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical concerns related to AI chatbots include:

- Potential plagiarism and intellectual property infringement.
- Ensuring the quality and accuracy of AI-generated content in scientific writing and medical education [2].

## A STEPWISE APPROACH FOR NEUROSURGEONS

Given the opportunities and challenges that AI chatbots bring, neurosurgeons should take the following step-by-step approach to safely harness their potential:

- Familiarise themselves with the capabilities and limitations of AI chatbots such as ChatGPT-4.
- Use AI-generated content as a starting point or for inspiration, but always verify the information provided using credible sources.
- Maintain critical thinking skills and be aware of potential biases and ethical concerns.
- Be mindful of plagiarism and intellectual property guidelines.
- Share your experiences and insights with colleagues to improve the understanding and safe adoption of AI chatbots in neurosurgery.

# ChatGPT-4 and Similar AI Chatbots in Neurosurgery

## CONCLUSION

AI chatbots such as ChatGPT-4 offer promising applications in neurosurgery, but their limitations and ethical concerns urge caution. By taking a stepwise approach and fostering a culture of collaboration, neurosurgeons can safely and effectively harness the potential of these advanced AI tools.

In the rapidly evolving technology landscape, it is important to embrace change. Rather than falling into fear or apprehension when new developments emerge, it is important to remain adaptable

and open to progress. This proactive approach is fundamental to promoting progress and moving our society forward. By embracing the latest technologies, we can overcome challenges, improve our capabilities and lead our nation toward a promising and prosperous future.

“

One should not allow innovative opportunities to pass you by unnoticed. Constantly striving to stay at the forefront of technological advancements ensures that we can push boundaries and explore uncharted frontiers

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# SANS2023

17<sup>th</sup> SANS Annual Meeting

## A REVIEW OF THE 2023 SANS ANNUAL MEETING

The theme of this year's meeting is "Taking Standards to the Next Level". SANS underlines that it is the duty of care providers to offer the highest possible standard of care to our patients.

From 04 to 06 March 2023, neurosurgeons, neurosurgery residents, medical students, clinical specialists, healthcare professionals and other healthcare professionals met in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia for the SANS Annual Meeting 2023.

The Section of Neurosurgery at King Abdulaziz Medical City, Western Region (KAMC-WR) and King Saud bin Abdulaziz University for Health Sciences (KSAU-HS) hosted this important annual national event.

This meeting brings together the experimental neurosurgery community to share the latest research findings and promote professional development through education and training.



## SANS2023

**TAKING STANDARDS  
TO THE NEXT LEVEL**

# #SANS 2023

Taking Standards to the Next Level

## SANS2023 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

# #1

### PROFESSOR ABDULHAKIM B. JAMJOOM

*President, SANS 2023*

The slogan of the meeting was " Taking Standards to the Next Level " as we felt that the scientific content of the meeting justified this. Many of the presentations were based on multi-centre collaborative research.

### 4-6 March 2023

It was a great honour for me to serve as President of SANS 2023. The 17th Annual Meeting of the Saudi Association of Neurological Surgery (SANS 2023) was hosted by the Section of Neurosurgery, King Abdulaziz Medical City (KAMC) and King Saud Bin Abdulaziz University for Health Sciences (KSAU-HS), Western Region, at the Hilton Hotel in Jeddah from 4-6 March 2023, and organised by Konoz Retaj as in previous years.

At this event, neurosurgeons and experts shared their recent clinical experiences in the field.

International guest speakers included Professor Atul Goel from India, Professor Marios Papadopoulos from the UK, Professor Jacques Morcos from the US and Professor Huw Duffau from France.

The meeting was held over a period of 3 days. The first day (Saturday 4 March 2023) was dedicated to workshops.



The main conference programme SANS 2023 (16 CME) was spread over two days (5-6 March 2023) and was divided into 14 sessions. The first session of each morning was general and took place in a hall. For the rest of the day, there were lectures in two halls, held simultaneously on both days. The programme included 9 talks by guest speakers, 71 oral presentations and 40 flash oral presentations. There were 2 hours each on both days for SSNI members' contributions on Day 1 and SSBS members' contributions on Day 2. There were also 85 digital posters available for viewing.

The meeting was organised by Konoj Retaj (KR). It was only possible thanks to the generous contributions of the sponsors and exhibitors. They (and their sponsors levels) were *Medtronic and AMICO* (Diamond), *Brianlab, and Tina Medex* (Platinum), *Gulf Medical, Zimmo, Almafjal, Dexpo, and B Braun* (Gold), *AlNozha, BD and Jana Medical* (Silver) and *Baxter* (Bronze).

SANS 2023 was the second time that the Section of Neurosurgery at KAMC-WR and KSAU-HS hosted the meeting. We were delighted to have the honour of hosting SANS 2023.

The last time we hosted this meeting was 13 years ago. Since then, the neurosurgical landscape in Saudi Arabia has changed significantly. On 17 October 2022, my brother Professor Zain Alabedeen Jamjoom passed away. SANS has lost its founder and first president. I am grateful that the Board of SANS decided to keep his memory alive by establishing the Professor Zain Alabedden Jamjoom Keynote Speech, which was delivered by Professor Ahmed Ammar. This was in addition to the already established Professor Khalaf Al-Moutaery Keynote Speech delivered by Professor Atul Goel. I would like to take the opportunity of writing the SANS 2023 report to comment on some aspects of the organising process that I hope will be useful for future meetings.

### ***SANS Central Office versus Meeting's Local Hosts***

Since 2015, the organisation of the annual meetings has rested with SANS and KR rather than the host health sectors. This should remain so, as it ensures continuity, consistency and freedom of choice. It is only fair that the local meeting hosts should continue to make most of the decisions. However, it is logical that the SANS central office to have a say in certain aspects. A clearer delineation is needed to avoid conflicts in the future.

#### **Suggestion:**

SANS Executive Board should develop guidelines on the roles of local hosts and SANS central office in organising the meeting. SANS members can discuss this at a future General Assembly.

### ***The Host Health Sectors (The Auspice)***

Since 2015, the host health sectors have had no or minimal influence on the organisation of the annual SANS meetings. This calls into question the need for their involvement as auspices or hosts. The use of the host health sector logo legally and morally requires their consent and presence at the opening ceremony. The latter sometimes disrupts the programme.

#### **Suggestion:**

SANS Executive Board should consider ruling that the organisation of all future annual meetings should be under the authority of SANS alone ( $\pm$  other collaborative societies). SANS members can discuss this in future General Assembly Meeting.

### ***The Organizing Company (KR)***

As things stand, the support of an organising company such as KR in running the annual SANS meetings is of paramount importance. It provides consistency and allows more centres to host the meeting, regardless of their infrastructural organisational support. Their fees are expensive, but it would be extremely difficult to do without them at present.

The staff at KR have done a great job, but they require considerable monitoring and follow-up.

**Suggestion:**

SANS could save money by scrutinising expenses and negotiating directly with the venue and hotels. It is possible that SANS can get better deals than KR.

**The Exhibitors (Sponsors)**

The main funding for the meeting comes from the exhibitors (sponsors). I put exhibitors before sponsors because their contribution is the price they pay for having the opportunity to exhibit their products in front of the leaders of neurosurgery in Saudi Arabia. Exhibitors know that their sponsorship is for SANS and not for the host healthcare sector. If the benefits of the different levels of sponsorship are clearly defined at the time of the invitation, this will help in the negotiation process. Funds may vary from year to year. The invitees, venue and the competitors are good selling points.

**Suggestion:**

There is an important role for SANS central office in assisting local hosts with fundraising.

**The Workshops**

Workshops are an integral part of the annual SANS meetings and a gentle introduction to the main conference. The workshop day allows the sponsors to set up their exhibition and the arriving participants to arrive at their leisure. Workshops require a lot of effort (faculty and preparation) and need to be well attended to be worthwhile. Based on our experience at SANS 2023, the review courses for residents such as Neuro-Oncology and Neurolife as well as the Student's Neurosurgical Boot Camp and Statistics and Research were well attended. The Intensive Neurosurgical Nursing Skills course (INNS) was not well attended.

**Suggestion:**

Some of the successful workshops should be repeated annually and their organisation should at SANS central office level rather than meeting's local hosts.

**The Keynote Speeches**

The two speeches: Professor Khalaf Al-Moutaery keynote speech by an international guest on Day 1 and Professor Zain Alabedden Jamjoom keynote speech by a national guest on Day 2 are wonderful events that I hope will continue for years.

**Suggestion:**

SANS members should continue to commemorate the two most senior Saudi neurosurgeons who have contributed so much to the advancement of neurosurgery in Saudi Arabia.

**The International Guests**

Having international guests in the annual meetings of SANS is a good tradition that should be continued. The cost is justified by the expertise they add to the meeting, as well as by making connections that may prove helpful to our trainees. The number of international guests invited has fluctuated at different meetings, and it is time that SANS set some guidelines.

**Suggestion:**

SANS Executive Board should setting the maximum number of international guests that can be invited to each meeting. SANS members can discuss this at a future General Assembly meeting.

**The National Invitees**

At SANS 2023, we were privileged to invite 120 neurosurgeons, two-thirds of whom came from outside Jeddah. This not only enriched the meeting and made it more successful, but the sponsors also appreciated the presence of the leaders of neurosurgery in Saudi Arabia in the exhibition hall. The cost of inviting such a number was justified.

**Suggestion:**

SANS should continue the tradition of sponsoring the attendance of neurosurgeons from all over Saudi Arabia as long as the Society's finances and fundraising allow.

### **Abstract Submission Closing Date and Abstract Selection**

The tradition of extending the deadline for abstract submission, the flood of submissions on the last day and the numerous submissions after the deadline are unacceptable habits that should be strongly discouraged. At SANS 2023, we have relied on abstract submissions for the selection of presentations. Apart from the international guest speakers, there were no invitations for presentations. We received 240 abstracts, many of which were of high quality. Reviewing the abstracts and preparing the programme took a lot of time. It also takes SCFHS 30 working days to process an application for CME.

#### **Suggestion:**

The abstract-based selection of presentations is the fairest way to get researchers from all over the country to participate. Furthermore, it is time that the deadline for abstract submission is no longer negotiable.

### **The Collaborative Societies**

At SANS 2023, we collaborated with the SSNI and the SSBS. Overall, it was a good experience, but I think we should learn from it if future collaboration with other associations should be contemplated.

#### **Suggestion:**

The collaborating societies should be involved early in the promotion, reception and selection of abstracts submitted to them.

The abstract submission form should include the name of the society to which the abstract is submitted.

### **The Prizes**

At SANS 2023 we awarded prizes to five presenters for their contribution to the scientific programme of the meeting ( Oral Presentations and posters). Recognising achievements by awarding prizes is a wonderful tradition that SANS should continue. It is very motivating and inspiring for the juniors.

#### **Suggestion:**

SANS Executive Board should develop some guidelines on the criteria for selecting award winners at future SANS meetings. I also suggest that SANS should award a medal to the candidate with the highest score in the final Saudi Board in Neurosurgery examination before the meeting, an idea like the British Norman Dott prize.

### **The Research Grants**

Regrettably, no research grants were awarded at SANS 2023. Supporting research through grants, even small amounts, is an important part of the mission of SANS. Our trainees and SANS members should be encouraged to undertake multidisciplinary and multi-centre research, which can be very costly.

#### **Suggestion:**

SANS should find a way to sponsor at least one multi-centre research project per year.

“

I feel fortunate to have been able to organise the meeting twice, and I hope that the points I discussed above are food for thought in order for the annual meetings of SANS go from strength to strength. Thank you to all who supported the meeting in one way or another.

*Professor Abdulkhalek B. Jamjoom*

# The 2023 SANS Annual Meeting

## MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

#2

### SPEAKERS

*Professor Jacques Morcos from USA  
Professor Atul Goel from, India  
Professor Marios Papadopoulos from UK  
Professor Hugues Duffau from France*

### WORKSHOPS

- 6 Workshops
- 65 Workshop Topics
- 45 attendees

### Scientific Programme

- 14 Sessions
- 137 Conference Topics
- 15 Conference Discussions

# #SANS2023

#2

## THE OPENING CEREMONY

The opening ceremony of The 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Saudi Association of Neurological Surgery was held on March 5<sup>th</sup>.

Dr. Mohammed AlZahrani, Executive Director, KAMC-WR, Ministry of National Guards Health affairs attended the opening ceremony and delivered a welcome speech.

The opening reception and faculty dinner were exceptional events for our association members and meeting attendees to get to know each other personally and to re-strengthen the scientific and social bonds to advance our practise in the field of neurosurgery.



# #SANS2023

## Keynote Speeches

### #3



### **PROFESSOR KHALAF ALMUTAIRI LECTURE**

*This special session was dedicated to the lecture of the late Professor Khalaf Almutairi.*

This important annual memorial lecture was delivered this year by Professor Atul Goel who gave a very interesting talk on



### **PROFESSOR ZAIN ALABEDEEN JAMJOOM LECTURE**

*This special session was dedicated to the lecture of the late Professor Zain Alabedeen Jamjoom.*

On day two, Professor Ahmed Ammar delivered this newly memorial lecture. He gave a very interesting talk on

# #SANS2023

Pre-conference workshops

#4

## The first day of the conference (Saturday 4 March 2023) was dedicated for the workshops

These workshops were:

- 1) Neuro-oncology Review Course  
(6 CME)
- 2) Neurolife  
(6 CME)
- 3) Research and Statistics Course  
(4 CME)
- 4) Intensive Neuroscience Nursing Skills (INNS)  
(7 CME)
- 5) Student Neurosurgical Boot Camp  
(7 CME)

● All the workshops, except INNS, had maximal attendance 45 attendees



# PHOTOS FROM THE WORKSHOPS



# #SANS2023

*Award Winners*

#5

## SANS GOLD AWARD MEDAL



**Upon the occasion of the 17th Annual Meeting of the Saudi Association of Neurological Surgery (SANS) from March 04 to 06, 2023, the SANS Gold Medal was awarded to professor Amro Al-Habib from Saudi Arabia.**

*Professor Amro has been selected as the 2023 recipient of the SANS Gold Medal for his longstanding contributions to the field of neurosurgery. SANS awards this medal each year during the annual meeting to a neurosurgeon in recognition of his or her outstanding contributions to the specialty.*

# #SANS2023

*SANS Gold Award Medal*

#6



## Sans Gold Medalist: Professor Amro Al-Habib

**Professor Amro Al-Habib is the Head of the Division of Neurosurgery at King Saud University and King Khalid University Hospital (KKUH).**

In addition, Dr Al-Habib is a Professor of Neurosurgery at the College of Medicine of King Saud University. He earned his medical degree from King Saud University in 1998 and

his Master's degree in Public Health from Harvard University in 2009.

In 2007, he completed his Canadian Royal College in Neurosurgery (FRCPC). A year later, he completed subspecialty fellowship training in spine surgery at the University of Calgary.

His clinical activities focus on neurosurgery and spine surgery, and his research interests include:

- Spinal elasticity
- Spinal navigation and improving the accuracy of spinal instrumentation
- Surgical innovations to improve surgical accuracy and patient outcomes

In 2009, he became head of the division of Neurosurgery at King Saud University and King Khalid University Hospital, where he remains today, and he also became a consultant neurosurgeon at Sulaiman Al-Habib Medical Group in Riyadh. Dr. Amro is a member of the examination committee of the Saudi Board of Neurosurgery, the Saudi Commission for Health Specialties. In addition, he holds memberships of some famous societies such as, American Association of Neurological Surgery (AANS), Congress Of Neurological Surgeons (CNS), and North American Spine Society (NASS). In 2013, Professor Amro was elected President of the Saudi Association of Neurosurgical Surgery (SANS), where he remained for the next nine years.

Over the years, he has published hundreds of papers. He has published

many peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters.

He has also been active in raising awareness of head and spinal cord injuries. Between 2014 and 2016, he led the "Think for Safety" and "Raise your head" campaigns to raise public awareness against the use of mobile phones while driving.

Dr Amro has received several research grants during the 15th and 16th annual meetings of the Saudi Association for Neurological Surgery and is the principal investigator of numerous clinical research studies.

He also continues to mentor residents, graduate students and fellows. In 2022, he was awarded the Best

Neurosurgery Teacher Award by the college of Medicine, King Saud University.

In addition to being a neurosurgeon, Dr Amro has taken on the role of an innovator whose desire to help patients has led him to advance the field over the years. He held four patents as follows:

- Lumbar Spine Pedicle Screw Guide
- Expandable intervertebral cage
- Distally Expanding Facet Implant with Integrated Plate and Delivery Device
- Distally expanding facet joint implant and delivery device

Dr Amro combines clinical skill and compassionate care to maximise patient outcomes.



# #SANS2023

*NeuroGraphia 2023*

#7

## A Celebration of Art and Neuroscience at SANS



### **Dr. Abdulrahman Jafar Sabbagh**

*King Abdulaziz University | KAU  
Jeddah, Saudi Arabia*

**The latest meeting of SANS unveiled the third edition of NeuroGraphia, a groundbreaking competition that has transformed an enduring idea into an exciting reality.**

With the unwavering support of the Society's past president, Prof. Amro Al-Habib, NeuroGraphia has evolved over the past three years into a thriving project that brings together a diverse group of talented individuals united by their passion for neuroscience and art.

The competition is divided into two categories: Scientific Illustration and Artistic Abstract. The NeuroGraphia 2023 Scientific Illustration competition showcased impressive work.

As the competition continues to gain momentum, we eagerly anticipate the captivating works that will enrich scientific publications and engaging the general public. With each new edition, NeuroGraphia reaffirms its commitment to celebrating the fusion of art and science.

*NeuroGraphia aims to inspire an appreciation for the intersection of neuroscience and art, fostering creativity and interest in neurosurgical and neuroscience illustrations.*

# #NeuroGraphia 2023

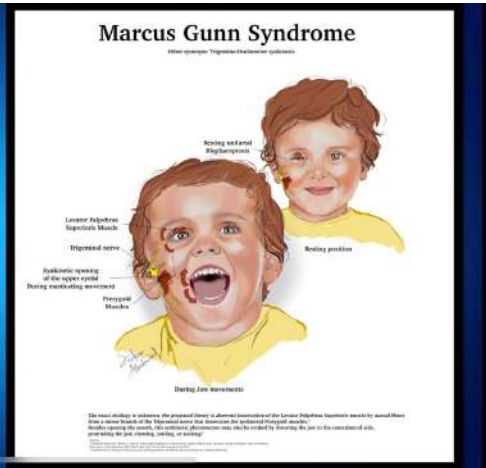
## NeuroGraphia Scientific Illustration Competition

#1

**SADEEM  
ALBULAIHED**

*Alfaisal University  
Riyadh*

Sadeem  
Albulaihed  
**1<sup>ST</sup> Place  
Winner**



Belal Sharab

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place  
Winner**



#2

**BELAL  
SHARAB**

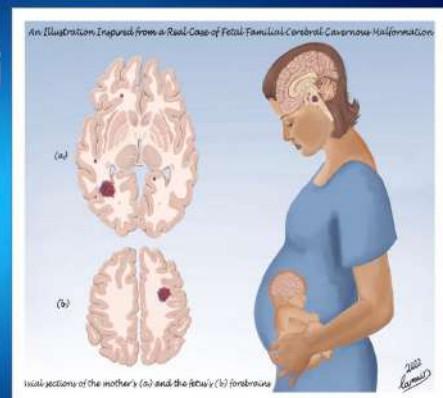
*Turkey*

#3

**LAMAIR  
AL BAKRI**

*KSAU-HS  
Jeddah*

Lamair Al Bakri  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Place  
Winner**



# #NeuroGraphia 2023

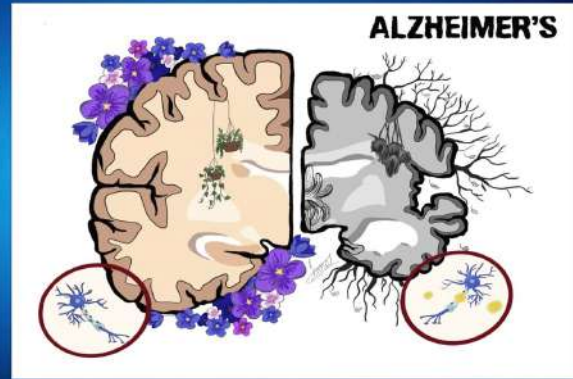
## Artistic Abstract Competition

#1

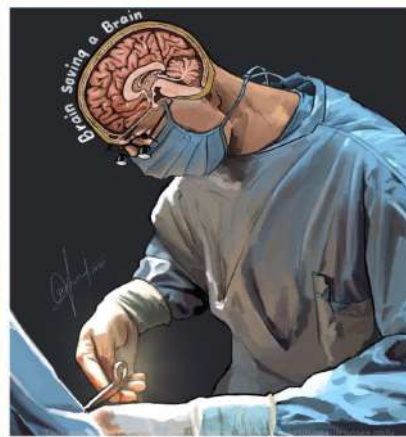
**LAMA  
AL GHAMDI**

Lama Al Ghamdi

**1<sup>ST</sup> Place  
Winner**



**Morouj Fatani**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Place  
Winner**



**MOROUJ  
FATANI**

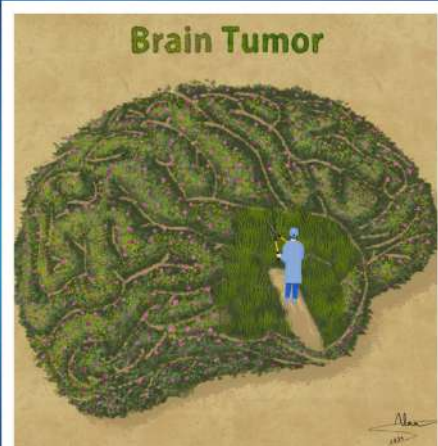
*KAU  
Jeddah*

#3

**ALAA  
MOGLAN**

*KSAU-HS  
Jeddah*

**Alaa Moglan**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Place  
Winner**



# #SANS2023

Enjoy the photos of the event



# THE EXPERT'S VOICE

*An Interview with a Neurosurgeon*



We are appreciative that Prof. Amro Al-Habib was able to take time out of his busy schedule to answer some questions related to neurosurgery and the profession in general. It is our pleasure to hear his perspectives on neurosurgery.

**Here's the interview:**

**SANS Newsletter (SN):** What are you most proud of personally?

**Amro Al-Habib(AH):** Being invited for this interview makes me really proud. I must have done something good to deserve this honour. I was also proud when:

- I saw the smiles on the faces of my family and teachers when I passed the neurosurgery board exam
- Seeing my patients get better after surgery, being pain free or able to walk again, which they could not do before surgery
- I hear from one of my previous trainees that a successful surgery he performed was influenced by my training
- When I see our work on the cover of the Journal of Neurosurgery Spine
- When I see SANS significantly contributing to the dissemination of knowledge, education and research in neurosurgery.

**SN):** Describe yourself using three words.

**(AH):** Learner, dedicated, and optimistic.

**(SN):** What are you passionate about?

**(AH):** Ideas New ideas that could change our practise and improve patient outcomes.

I am also passionate about performing surgical procedures. If done right, from the right indication to the perfect execution, it is like a great work of art.

**(SN):** How do you handle stressful situations?

**(AH):** Stay calm, stay calm, and stay calm. Try your best to be calm, content and remember similar situations to remind yourself how they were resolved. Avoid blaming others.

**(SN):** What are you known for?

**(AH):** My colleagues would be in a better position to answer this one.

**SN):** Most overused phrase?

**(AH):** It's O.K

**(SN):** What was the best advice anyone ever gave you?

**(AH):** Work hard, never complain.

**(SN):** If you were not a neurosurgeon, what career would you choose?

**(AH):** Architect

**(SN):** How do you spend your spare time?

**(AH):** Playing sports, cooking, or reading.

## *An Interview with a Neurosurgeon*

**(SN): What is your favourite movie?**

**(AH):** From history, I think "The Message or Al Risala" was the best. I like Tom Hanks movies. I also find animation movies enjoyable. I don't watch horror movies!

**(SN): When/how did you know neurosurgery was the right path for you?**

**(AH):** During my 2nd year in medical school when I came across an article about spinal cord injuries. It was about a research work on spinal cord injuries in animals with promising results.

**(SN): We are wondering about what is your genetic background. Do you have doctors in your family? How do your children look at you as a dad and neurosurgeon?**

**(AH):** Neither of my parents was a doctor. My father is a professor of economics. My mother was a school principal. May God bless them all.

To my children, I am a father; I hope I am not too boring or strict!

**(SN): Which neurosurgeon (living or deceased) has most influenced your neurosurgical career?**

**(AH):** Professor Zain Jamjoom, may God bless him.

**(SN): Can you please share some of your experiences in the early days of your practice?**

**(AH):** Starting an academic neurosurgery practice was challenging. In my clinical practice, I was fortunate to work with neurosurgeons who had much more experience. I felt that I had people I could rely on for support and guidance. I often seek advice from experts in my field, even

outside clinical neurosurgery, for example in research or innovation.

**(SN): As a successful neurosurgeon, professor and former President of SANS, how did you strike a balance among these roles and duties?**

**(AH):** I wish I did! This is a domain of continuous struggle. But, as they say, "Better lucky than good". The board of SANS, the members of SANS and the administrative staff of SANS (led by Sumayyah AbuNayyan) did all the work and I was happy to facilitate things. I am very grateful to them for that.

**(SN): In your position now, knowing what you do, what would you say to yourself when you were beginning your medical career?**

**(AH):** It's a long road, buckle up.

**(SN): Where did you do your medical residency? Could you describe your journey?**

**(AH):** I did my residency at the University of Toronto. Honestly, I am not sure that the path of training in neurosurgery would be much different between the established training centres. You have to continue to "like" what you do and put in the time and effort it takes. For me, it was a challenge to change the place and way of practice. I often felt homesick. But I received a lot of support and encouragement. The further I progressed in training and learned more about neurosurgery, the more confidence I gained and the more secure I felt. As long as you focus on your patients and do the best for them, you should be fine. That's what I always told myself anyway!

## *An Interview with a Neurosurgeon*

**(SN): Describe the biggest issue you see challenging your practice?**

**(AH):** Balancing academia, research, education, and income.

**(SN): What was the majority of your surgical practice?**

**(AH):** During the past 15 years: Spine surgery

**(SN): What made you select spine as your specialty?**

**(AH):** Intuitively for me. But scientifically speaking, spinal surgery

**(SN): Are you particular about the instruments that you use?**

**(AH):** Very much

**(SN): Do you have a specific case that sticks with you?**

**(AH):** I remember my complications more than my successful cases.

**(SN): How did you feel about taking responsibility for choices that you know will profoundly affect your patient's life?**

**(AH):** It makes me very proud and I feel honoured to be in this position.

**(SN): Could you tell us about what made you want to be president of the SANS, and how did you achieve this?**

**(AH):** In fact, I did not choose to become president of SANS, it chose me!

**(SN): What future do you envision in neurosurgery?**

**(AH):** The development of basic research will change medicine and especially

neurosurgery. Imaging will change the data we collect. Technology will change our surgical technique. I hope to see more integration of patient-specific data from clinical information, basic science and imaging (both pre- and post-operative). This will provide more precision and less invasive intervention. Artificial intelligence could play a role in this by personalising patient treatment by integrating patient data from all relevant domains.

**(SN): As a successful neurosurgeon and professor, what is important in neurosurgical training?**

**(SH):** Thank you for the compliment. I would advise them, myself included, to keep learning and stay passionate. As a trainee, always consider yourself in the position of the consultant (or the one who has the most responsibility for the patient) and carry out your care and decisions accordingly. In doing so, consider the patient as yourself or as an immediate family member

**(SN): What advice would you give to students who aspire to be in neurosurgery?**

**(AH):** Are you sure!

**(SN):** Thank you for talking to us, and we are very proud of your achievements. Is there anything you can tell us that might surprise people reading the article?

**(AH):** You should have a dream. And, when you do, you should try to achieve that dream. And remember that achieving dreams involves hard work and significant sacrifice!

# NEUROSURGERY COMMUNITY

## RESIDENCY PROGRAM GRADUATES

Congratulations to our recently graduated Neurosurgery  
Thank you for your commitment to the health and wellbeing of others during  
such volatile times! We look forward to your future successes and  
contributions to the neurosurgery community.



*Dr. Ahmed Alahmari*



*Dr. Ahmad Albeshri*



*Dr. Anas Bardeesi*



*Dr. Alya Almaazmi*



*Dr. Bassam Fallatah.*



*Dr. Faisal Asiri*



*Dr. Fatimh Alsaffar*



*Dr. Ibrahim Alzahrani*



*Dr. Majed AlGhamdi*



*Dr. Meshari Almutairi*



*Dr. Shatha Alharbi*



*Dr. Shaymaa Al-Umran*

# NEUROSURGERY COMMUNITY

## NEWS

### THE SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL OF NEUROSURGERY

The Saudi commission of Health specialties (SCHS) has decided to extend the work of the Scientific Council for Neurosurgery as follows:

Dr. Hosam Al Jehani, **President**  
 Dr. Ahmed Al Zahraini, **Member**  
 Dr. Mohammed Halwani, **Member**  
 Dr. Hamoud Al Dhahsh, **Member**  
 Dr. Abdulrahman Sabbagh, **Member**  
 Dr. Khalid Bajunaid, **Member**

We are delighted that this group of individuals brings their unique perspectives to the work of neurosurgery. A big thank you goes to Professor Ahmed Al Khani for completing his term as President. We thank all members and look forward to working together to advance the mission of neurosurgery in Saudi Arabia

### HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR MEMBERS

#### Dr. Yahya Khormi



SANS is pleased and proud to announce the promotion of its member Dr Yahya Khormi, who has been promoted to Associate Professor.

This is due in part to his published research and community service.

#### Dr. Hosam Al-Jehani



Congratulations to Dr. Hosam Al-Jehani on his renewal appointment o as a part time Adjunct Professor in the Department of Neurology and Neurosurgery at McGill University.

#### Dr. Naif Alotaibi



We are proud to announce that Dr Naif is the first Saudi neurosurgeon at the H-index level. He has been ranked by ResearchGate as the most influential researcher in North America among the brightest minds in medicine. He was also included in the list of the 100 most influential accounts on Twitter for neurosurgery.

#### Dr. Hussam Jabri



Dr. Hussam successfully conducted a workshop on maxmorespine surgical technique for in Germany. We are proud to have such an international instructor.

## NEWS

## King Abdulaziz University Launches Neurosurgery Student Club

**On Wednesday, 9 Rabea Thani 1444 Hijri, 5 October 2022, His Excellency the President of King Abdulaziz University approved the decision of the Council of the College of Medicine to establish the Neurosurgery Student Club.**

This important initiative, spearheaded by medical student Omar Aljohani and supported by his senior colleagues Reem Almustafa and Rafaa Algethmi, aims to enhance students' skills and knowledge in the captivating field of neurosurgery.

Under the expert leadership of Dr Abdulrahman Jafar Sabbagh, consultant neurosurgeon and associate professor at the college, the club aims to enhance the quality of future neurosurgeons by nurturing the aspirations of those eager to become the future consultants. The club aims to provide them with invaluable resources, guidance and opportunities to immerse themselves in this enthralling specialty. Embodying core values of credibility, respect, transparency, appreciation, excellence, initiative and creativity, the Club is committed to uniting

efforts and improving neurosurgery education and research for future generations.

The Neurosurgery Student Club had a remarkable debut at the Saudi Neurological Surgery Conference (SANS 2023). The booth, which showcased the club's mission and activities, attracted considerable interest and accolades from attendees. This event highlighted the importance of student leadership and the exceptional contributions of Omar, Reem and Rafaa in shaping the future of neurosurgery education and awareness.

The club strongly believes that education and mentorship are the cornerstones to improving outcomes in neurosurgery. For this reason, the club is dedicated to providing students with access to top-tier educational resources, including online courses, webinars and workshops. The club's ambitious goal is to ignite a wave of innovation and excellence in the field, inspiring and empowering medical students interested in neurosurgery through a dynamic range of educational programmes, scientific research opportunities and awareness initiatives.



Dr. Abdulrahman Sabbagh



Omar Aljohani



Rafaa Algethmi



Reem Almustafa



# NEUROSURGERY NEWS

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**7th ARABSPINE 2023 Annual Meeting**

**2023 Theme:**

- Cranio-cervical junction disorders
- Spinal Tumors
- Degenerative Scoliosis
- Spinal Trauma

**Cadaveric Dissection, Tactics & Debates**

- Expert panel discussion
- National and international surgeons
- Live surgery

**9-11 November 2023**

Department of Neurosurgery at King Abdulaziz Medical City in Riyadh

King Saud bin Abdulaziz University for Health Sciences

W. Alshaya  
President of the Meeting  
Waelalshaya@yahoo.com  
spine@nshdubai.com  
www.arabspine.org

**SAVE THE DATE !**

**ARABSPINE COURSE DIPLOMA**

**ASCD**

**MODULE 1** 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023

**Course Highlight**

- Lumbar Spine: Basic Science & Practice Essentials
- Lumbar Disc Herniation and Sciatica
- Lumbar Canal Stenosis
- Spondylolisthesis
- Axial Back Pain/ Sacroiliac Joint Pain
- Facet Joint Pain. Evidence, Outcome & Clinical Pearls

**Practical Hands-on Workshop**

- Free-Hands - Pedicle Screw Fixation - Thoracic / Lumbar
- Imaging Guided Pedicle Screw Fixation - Spinal Navigation
- Percutaneous Pedicle Screw Fixation
- Mini TLIF / ALIF
- Lateral and Anterior Approach
- Spine Microsurgery
- Spinal Cord Stimulation
- Spinal Injection techniques and Pain Management techniques

**MODULE 3** 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023

**Course Highlight**

- Tumors
  - Primary Spinal Tumors
  - Spinal Metastasis
  - Surgery
- Infections
  - Spondylodiscitis
  - Pott's Disease
  - Surgical Infections in Children
- Spinal Trauma
  - Cervical Injury
  - Thoraco Lumbar Spine Injuries
  - Rehabilitation after SCI

**Practical Hands-on Workshop**

- Thoracic Spine: - Posterolateral Approach
- Mini-thoracotomy
- MIS for Lumbar Spine
- ALIF & OLF
- Cervical Spine: - Anterior & Posterior Approaches
- Pain Management techniques

**WHO CAN ATTEND?**

Neurosurgeons  
Orthopedists  
Spine Specialists

Spine Related Specialists (Specialists, Chiropractors, Pain Specialists, Rheumatologists, etc)

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In collaboration with: INASSI, RCSI, AMAX MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Accredited by: AMAX MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

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Education & Training Center, Neuro Spinal Hospital, Dubai

# NEUROSURGERY NEWS

## UPCOMING EVENTS

September  
**09-13**  
2023

**The 2023 CNS Annual Meeting**  
Washington, D.C.

[Learn more](#)

December  
**04-08**  
2023

**The 2023 WFNS World  
Congress Of Neurosurgery**  
Cape Town

[Learn more](#)

For more information ,you can reach us at:



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<http://www.sans.org.sa>

NEWSLETTER

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Issue 2

**SANS**

Saudi Arabia