

NASS Partners with the Indonesian Spine Society and the International Society for Minimal Intervention in Spinal Surgery in Jakarta

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NASS Board of Directors member Dr. Norman Chutkan headed a delegation of NASS members who travelled to Jakarta, Indonesia to serve as faculty for the 3rd Combined Scientific Meeting of the International Society for Minimal Intervention in Spinal Surgery (ISMIS) and the Indonesian Spine Society (ISS). NASS Past Presidents Jean-Jacques Abitbol and David Wong participated as well. NASS members David Fish, Eldin Karaikovic and Hani Mhaidli also served on the faculty.

NASS international member, Dr. Bambang Darwono, (Indonesia) was the meeting chairman and local host. The program included two days of didactic lectures and a full day hands-on cadaver workshop.

Brad Repsold, NASS Associate Executive Director monitored the educational program for NASS. Attendees from multiple countries along the Pacific Rim were offered a free one-year membership to NASS with benefits including access to publications such as *The Spine Journal* and *SpineLine*. Members may also view NASS products such as the *Clinical Guidelines* series and Patient Safety brochures for the Sign, Mark and X-Ray program (SMaX).

Indonesia is a nation of multiple islands with a large population of 260 million people. The rich Indonesian culture was highlighted at the meeting's opening ceremony with an exhibition of traditional dancing and music. The musicians used a unique Indonesian instrument called an

angklung. Each was fashioned from moving pieces of bamboo attached to a base. The length of the bamboo dictated the note that would be played when the instrument was shaken. Several could be fastened in a row and a tune generated by shaking the various angklungs corresponding to notes in the music.

Indonesia has unique challenges in providing treatment for spinal disorders. For example, access to specialty services is limited by the population to physician ratio. Approximately 1,000 orthopedic surgeons serve a country with a population of 260 million people. This translates to 0.38 orthopedic surgeons per 100,000 people. The ratio in the United States is 9.4 surgeons per 100,000 people and in Canada the figure is 4.5 per 100,000 people.

The scientific portion of the meeting had an emphasis on minimally invasive techniques, but included a wide variety of topics. NASS faculty gave presentations on operating room patient safety, surgical indications, strategies for dealing with complications and emerging technologies such as stem cells.

The hands-on cadaver lab afforded participants an opportunity to apply some of the techniques and instrumentation discussed in the didactic lectures. C-arms and expert guidance from the faculty facilitated the learning experience.

In their remarks at the opening ceremony, the presidents of ISMISS and ISS as well as Dr. Darwono were very appreciative of the commitment to the conference NASS made. Dr. Wong responded on behalf of NASS. He thanked the organizers for their wonderful hospitality and pointed out that partnering with other international spine societies such as ISMISS and ISS to co-sponsor an educational meeting was a perfect venue to further NASS's philosophy of "advancing global spine care."

