

Picking Brains on a Global Scale

Practice Current and Practice Buzz

Alonso Zea Vera, MD, Luca Bartolini, MD, and Aravind Ganesh, MD, DPhil, FRCPC

Neurology: Clinical Practice August 2022 vol. 12 no. 4 e33-e34 doi:10.1212/CPJ.0000000000200062

Correspondence

Dr. Zea Vera
azeavera@
childrensnational.org

When faced with challenging clinical situations, we often ask our colleagues: Can I pick your brain? As clinicians, we aim to provide evidence-based care, often presented as standardized protocols and guidelines. However, practice differences are frequently encountered when discussing challenging cases with peers. These may be more frequent among clinicians of different institutions and/or countries. The reasons for these variations are endless: lack of enough evidence, disparities in access to resources, local population characteristics, among others. Understanding these variations is important for a few key reasons. It can help us clarify the extent of equipoise vs consensus on different aspects of challenging or controversial topics in neurologic care or practice. It can reveal remarkable practice patterns that may have become entrenched despite an evidence vacuum. For researchers, innovators, and policymakers, it can reveal regional variations in practice patterns that will need to be accommodated or addressed when considering large-scale trials, quality improvement initiatives, or introducing new workflows or technologies. Yet few individuals or groups have access to a sufficiently widespread population of neurology practitioners—sampling within one's own personal or professional network can be misleading. So, what if you could pick the brains of neurology practitioners around the world?

Practice Current, launched 6 years ago, was an ambitious project with the goals of becoming an interactive exchange of ideas on controversial topics, giving a voice to neurology practitioners around the world, and establishing worldwide connections.^{1,2} Practice Current's aim is not to provide management guidelines or find the right answer but to challenge the readers to question their practices, learn from peers around the world, and inspire ideas for future research. The success of Practice Current resulted in the launch of Practice Buzz, its faster and more focused cousin, a few years later. In this editorial, we reflect on the past success and look to the future of these 2 sections.

Practice Current tackles specific topics seeking to achieve significant depth or granularity. These are relatively timeless topics in that they could be expected to be relevant for at least the next few years. The interested authors work together with the editors to create highly effective surveys, in a process that may take several months. In addition, the authors select and interview experts in depth about their perspectives on the selected topic. Consistent with our commitment to give a voice to neurologists around the world, these experts are selected from different countries, with at least one from a middle-income or low-income country, and represent diversity in sex and ethnicity. These surveys are presented in an interactive map on the Practice Current webpage, are featured in a Commentary digital publication in *Neurology® Clinical Practice*, and may be highlighted in the *Neurology®* Podcast. Authors may also request access to the final survey results for statistical analysis and publication, expected to be submitted to American Academy of Neurology (AAN)-affiliated journals first for consideration.

Practice Buzz was created to accommodate the rapid advances in neurology and the emergence of time-sensitive discussions. Surveys are submitted in a launch-ready form. If approved, the editors may make minor modifications before launching it. The expectation is to launch these

MORE ONLINE

More Practice Buzz

NPub.org/NCP/
practicebuzz

More Practice Current

NPub.org/NCP/
practicecurrent

Department of Neurology (AZV), Children's National Hospital, Washington, DC; Division of Pediatric Neurology (LB), The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University, Providence, RI; and Department of Clinical Neurosciences (AG), Community Health Sciences, and the Hotchkiss Brain Institute, University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Funding information and disclosures are provided at the end of the article. Full disclosure form information provided by the authors is available with the full text of this article at [Neurology.org/cp](https://www.neurology.org/cp).

surveys within a month of submission. Therefore, multiple rounds of corrections cannot be accommodated. Practice Buzz is a great option to rapidly sample our readers on controversial hot topics. Practice Buzz surveys are displayed in an interactive world map on the Practice Buzz webpage with short reactions and comments from experts around the world, similar to a forum. Similar to Practice Current, authors may request access to the final survey results for statistical analysis and publication, expected to be submitted to AAN-affiliated journals first for consideration.

Practice Current has launched 10 surveys, published 10 Commentary articles, published 3 Research Articles,³⁻⁵ and been highlighted in 3 *Neurology* Podcasts. Practice Buzz has already launched 3 surveys. Our surveys have often received more than 1,000 responses from more than 60 countries, and Practice Current podcasts have been downloaded hundreds of thousands of times. We are frequently amazed by the remarkable insights that arise not only from the analyses of these responses but also from the depth of engagement of our interviewed experts. As the current editors (A.G. and A.Z.V.) and previous editor and creator of the sections (L.B.), we are humbled and energized by their success and look to the future with excitement. We are standardizing and simplifying the submissions to expedite the survey processing time. We have posted our Instructions for Authors, including a survey design guideline to help authors create effective surveys.⁶ Our vision for the next years includes an expansion of the Practice Current/Buzz editorial team with members of diverse backgrounds and the creation of a core group of experts from different countries and specialties to collaborate with Practice Current/Buzz authors. We have created an online intake form where experts from around the world can sign up to participate (NPub.org/NCP/PracticeCurrentExpert). These efforts will streamline and facilitate the creation of new surveys.

Finally, Practice Current/Buzz's goal is often interpreted as only to assess the diagnosis and management of specific conditions. Although this is part of our goal, contemporary issues such as work/life balance, neurology education, and blind spots in topics of equity, diversity, and inclusion also affect day-to-day practice and are well within the scope of

Practice Current/Buzz. This is exemplified by the recent Practice Buzz survey on working neurology-parents' challenges in the COVID-19 era.⁷ In the future, we aim to include more of these topics in Practice Current or Practice Buzz, depending on the characteristics of the survey.

Practice Current and Practice Buzz have become unique and valuable platforms that benefit respondents, authors, and readers. Participants can share their voices and easily compare their practices to peers around the world using our interactive world map, where several filters can be applied. Authors can pick the brain of the global neurology community and connect with worldwide experts. Readers get the opinions of clinicians and experts around the world in a succinct manner. Consistent with our mantra of global collaboration, we look forward to continuing to engage with the worldwide neurology community to shape the future of these sections. This could be in the form of submissions, suggestions for improvements, or criticisms. Please do not hesitate to contact our Editorial Team if you have any questions at digital@neurology.org.

Study Funding

No targeted funding reported.

Disclosure

The authors report no relevant disclosures. Full disclosure form information provided by the authors is available with the full text of this article at [Neurology.org/cp](https://www.neurology.org/cp).

References

1. Bartolini L. Practice current: establishing worldwide connections. *Neurol Clin Pract*. 2016;6(6):470-471.
2. Bartolini L, Millichap JJ. Practice current: a new way of interpreting contemporary neurology. *Neurol Clin Pract*. 2016;6(1):14-15.
3. Ganesh A, Bartolini L, Wesley S. Worldwide survey of neurologists on approach to autoimmune encephalitis. *Neurol Clin Pract*. 2020;10(2):140-148.
4. Bartolini L, Muscal E. Differences in treatment of anti-NMDA receptor encephalitis: results of a worldwide survey. *J Neurol*. 2017;264(4):647-653.
5. Ganesh A, Bartolini L, Singh R, et al. Equipose in management of patients with acute symptomatic carotid stenosis (hot carotid). *Neurol Clin Pract*. 2021;11(1):25-32.
6. AAN. *Practice Current and Practice Buzz: Survey Design Guidelines*. Neurology Clinical Practice [online]. Accessed November, 26, 2021. cp.neurology.org/practice-current-and-practice-buzz-survey-design-guidelines.
7. Abdennadher T, Patel S, Jenkins J, Singal D. Practice buzz: working neurology-parents' challenges in the COVID-19 era [online]. Accessed January, 6, 2022. [neurology.org/practicebuzz/women-in-neurology](https://www.neurology.org/practicebuzz/women-in-neurology).