

Degenerative Spinal Phenotypes Focus Group

Creating a common language to advance knowledge

Background

There is great interest in findings observed on clinical imaging, such as Modic changes, endplate defects, disc degeneration, paraspinal muscle fatty infiltration, spinal stenosis, etc. Yet there is a lack of uniformity in their definitions and measurement, as well as disagreement on their roles in painful spinal conditions. Clear definitions and more uniform use of terms and core measures are needed to facilitate accurate communication in medicine and research, avoid unnecessary confusion and allow clearer comparisons and syntheses of related study results to advance knowledge.

The Degenerative Spinal Phenotypes Focus Group is meeting again in 2017 to advance this goal. The attendance of leaders of regional spine societies (Asia, Europe, North America, India, etc.), spine journal editorial board members and other international leaders in clinical care and research makes the ISSLS meeting an ideal forum for such a focus group, although all are welcome.

Focus in Athens

At the next meeting we plan to:

- 1) Briefly discuss the publication of the results of the systematic review on use of the term degenerative disc disease, a 'white paper' summarizing the Focus Group's recommendations on use of the term, and next steps to broaden acceptance of the Group's recommendations.
- 2) Review and discuss the results of the nomenclature survey on endplate findings on MRI that was distributed to ISSLS members in the fall of 2016 and the resulting publication, along with next steps to extend this work.
- 3) Decide on a model for reaching informed, consensus on nomenclature and the selection of core measures for the various other spinal phenotypes in which the Group has previously expressed interest.
- 4) As a segue to the second half of the shared focus group session, an overview of the different imaging definitions of lumbar spinal stenosis will be presented.

Welcome to the Focus Group!

We look forward to seeing you in Athens.

Co-Chairs: Josef Assheuer, Michele Battié, Dino Samartzis & Bradley Weiner

International Taskforce on Diagnosis and Management of Lumbar Spinal Stenosis

Background

At ISSLS Singapore 2016 the Focus Group “International Taskforce on Diagnosis and Management of Lumbar Spinal Stenosis” met for a third time (after ISSLS Seoul 2014 and ISSLS San Francisco 2015) and discussed the results of the International Delphi Study on history factors in the clinical diagnosis of LSS for which the Taskforce was awarded the ISSLS Clinical Prize 2016. The next project of the Taskforce was launched – a Delphi Study to determine what the next step is in diagnosis beyond history. It was decided that this study will include a list of diagnostic criteria. We compiled a list of physical examination items and special studies (MRI, CT, x-ray, myelogram, EMG, ABI etc.) to answer the question “What will take the certainty of the diagnosis of LSS from 80% to 90-100%?”

This preliminary list was then distributed to the Taskforce members in the following months for their feedback if to include each item or not (Phase 1 of Delphi process).

Focus in Athens

At the next meeting we plan to:

- 1) Discuss responses of the Taskforce members on the list of diagnostic criteria.
- 2) Confirm a list to send out to all ISSLS members for their input (Phase 2, Round 1).
 - a) Indicate that the patient has answered YES to all items in the 7-item history questionnaire from our first Delphi study.
 - b) Provide a list of physical exam and diagnostic studies to choose from (Now that you know the patient has said yes to the 7 questions, which test would you choose next?)
 - c) Participants then choose the tests in a logical order, and assign a certainty of diagnosis based on each item (Until either 100% certainty is obtained, or no additional tests are selected). It was noted that we should start certainty slider at the last certainty in survey (give them their last answer)
- 3) Discuss next projects with a Delphi Study on surgical indications for LSS as a priority for a next study.

We look forward to meeting with you in Athens!

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