

Member Attitude and Needs Survey for The American Pain Society

Situation

APS wants to determine members' interest in potential new benefits in the areas of Online Networking, Online Information, and other possible uses of Technology. These potential new benefits are of particular interest because of their potential appeal in attracting new members to join APS. It is believed these younger "New Professionals" may have a greater desire for online services, and these new benefits could be an important benefit in recruiting new members.

Study Goals

The overall study goal is to determine how APS current members would value new Online Networking capabilities, and new methods of presenting Online Information.

Secondary objectives for this research are to understand:

1. What is the relative appeal of online networking capabilities, including ListSers, Online Discussion Forums, live forum chat, a web site specifically for networking (similar to these business networking sites [LinkedIn](#), [Ryze](#), [Spoke](#)), and other services.
2. Outside of APS, are members engaged in Online Networking? If so, is this confined to younger members, and what methods are they currently using?
3. For potential new benefits of **presenting information online**, what specific types of information would member be most interested in receiving? In addition, would members consider APS the best source of information, in terms of
 - a. Credibility of sources of information
 - b. Depth of information
 - c. Ability to update information
 - d. and other factors that would affect the perceived quality of information
4. An option to presenting information online is the ability to download information to a PDA or audio/video players (MP3, IPod). Would members value this capability, and would the factors affecting other information apply? Example of content could include:
 - a. Opioid conversions,
 - b. Equianalgesic charts,
 - c. Analgesic "formulary"
 - d. Conversion tables for analgesics
 - e. Common adverse drug effects
 - f. Recommended algorithms for different pain states

- g. Conversion charts and drug-interaction tables
 - h. Videos and/or PowerPoint presentations from meetings and training
5. Given the multidisciplinary nature of the society, how would the various specialties and practice areas value these potential new benefits? Are there services that would have wide appeal, especially for the largest segments of members (Anesthesiology, basic science, nurses and psychologist?). Or would a “niche service” approach have more appeal?
 6. Instead of developing a new source of online information, would it be valuable for members for APS to act as an aggregator of information, possibly as simply as collecting and categorizing links to various online resources, and presenting these in existing venues like APS E-NEWS? Or are there partnering opportunities APS could access for new sources of valuable information and not “reinvent the wheel,” but at the same time provide a valuable service to members?
 7. Finally, would members be willing to pay for these services, either on a subscription or per-use basis? If so, how much would they be willing to pay?

Possible Future Action: How Will Survey Answers Be Meaningful to the Society?

What will be learned from this study, and what actions could APS take as a result of the survey responses? Is it realistic for APS to implement new programs and benefits based on the insights gained from this study?

For example, APS may learn the following:

- Member do value online networking and new sources of online information, AND
- they view APS as the most credible source or these services, AND
- they indicate a priority of the new services they desire, AND
- there is a broad interest among specialties and disciplines, especially the largest groups, AND
- members are willing to pay for these services.

Assuming all of the above, would APS want to commit the budget and staff resources to develop and market these new benefits?

What Questions To Ask?

Prior surveys have offered valuable member feedback on the type of current benefits the value, and ideas for new information services. These suggestions should be used as a starting point in developing questions for the current Needs Survey. Based on this past member feedback, the next survey questions should attempt to define the exact areas of information that would be most valuable to members.

Past Research Findings

Member surveys for APS conducted in August and September, 2007 produced qualitative responses relating to benefits of APS membership, and suggestions for new programs.

Members' responses to the question **“What has been the major benefit to you of being a member in APS?”** have been coded and grouped by categories. This qualitative feedback indicated that information is the most important benefit of membership. Although “networking” tied for the first place in terms of the number of times the term was mentioned, almost all the other categories included accessing some type of information. (NOTE: All responses sorted by category of response and medical specialty/practice area attached at the end of this Study Plan.)

Summary of responses are:

Networking with members	60	16%
Inter-disciplinary exchange of information	60	16%
Research information and materials	51	14%
Journal of Pain	41	11%
Information on practices in pain management	38	10%
Conferences	32	9%
Education programs, other training	19	5%
Bulletin, newsletters, other publications	18	5%
Government and industry advocacy	17	5%
ListSers	10	3%
Guidelines and clinical care information	9	3%
SIGS	3	1%
Other	8	2%

When asked **“What could APS do to enhance the value of your membership?”** the largest number of replies focused mainly on the value of more in-depth education and information focused on specific areas. Several responses mentioned online education and information. Typical replies were:

more research on the assessment and treatment of pain in adult and pediatric populations

information on new advances in translational research that can be applied to clinical research

more presentations that deal with acute and perioperative pain issues

Create an online communication system and resource center. This should be searchable, so that specific questions could be answered or experts contacted.

THERE IS A DISCONNECT AMONG OF PAIN PROFESSIONALS OR THOSE INVOLVED IN PAIN. PAIN ARTICLES BY NURSES OR PHARMACISTS SEEM SO FEW COMPARED TO MD AND PHD.

more focused meetings and workshops. I like the workshops where one comes away with a new skill set.

Having some more topics on the clinical application of psychology topics in pain management.

Perhaps we should do a pharma roundtable at APS similar to what we've done with EPA to foster greater awareness of emerging pharmaceutical and medical devices

More online educational experience using the information and talks given at the APS in the groundbreaking areas. Taking some of the receptor theories such as multiple mu and making understanding the ramifications of these issues part of everyday practice.