



President's Corner

Dear Colleagues,

It has been a very busy two months for the ASPN since the last newsletter was sent to the membership. The Website has been redesigned and is up and running. The member's only section is password secured and contains more information and benefits to members.

Thanks to everyone who attended the business meeting at the ASN in San Francisco in November. The format of the meeting was changed to include interaction of the membership and discussion of issues by the membership. The three topics discussed were funding issues and the formation of a corporate board, public policy issues and workforce/training and certification issues. The format of the meeting was well received and I want thank everyone for their comments and the lively interaction of the membership at the meeting.

In November 2007 the ASPN sent a letter to CMS about the conditions of participation for the approval and reapproval of transplant centers to perform solid organ transplants. At issue was the requirement of 10 young adult transplants to be performed to meet reapproval requirements. Such a requirement would adversely affect many pediatric transplant programs. As a result of ASPN's efforts, as well as others in the pediatric transplant community, CMS revised and clarified the interpretation of the Transplant Conditions of Participation, including removal of the volume requirement for adults for reapproval of primary Pediatric Transplant Programs, who also do young adult transplants. This is a major achievement for our community.

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) report which was released in November 2007 and reports that transplant recipients under age 18 when transplanted but are now adults (transitional recipients) are more likely than their pediatric and adult counterparts to experience transplant failure. The ASPN is encouraging additional studies to create and implement transition plans for these vulnerable patients.

The invited science program for the annual meeting has been finalized and the platform and poster sessions will be formulated at the program committee meeting in January. We look forward to an exciting program and we look forward to seeing everyone in Honolulu for the annual meeting in May!

Please see the announcement about the dues payment and our new program for job advertisement in the newsletter.

Safe and Happy Holidays to all!!

Sharon P. Andreoli, M.P.

sandreol@iupui.edu

Announcements

IMPORTANT DUES PAYMENT UPDATE!!

Below are just a few of the benefits of being an ASPN member in good standing:

- Ability to submit and sponsor abstracts to the PAS meeting
- Ease of online dues payments
- Access to the directory of members and fellows
- Access to information and tips on billing practices
- Access to information on setting up practices and more!

Our ever-growing Members-Only section of the ASPN website is still in its infancy and we aim to make it one of the most valuable sources of information for all pediatric nephrologists.

Your dues support much of the infrastructure for these and our other activities that educate the public and protect our interests and those of our patients. Therefore, we must pursue payment of past-due membership dues. With the understanding that some of you will not be able to pay the amount owed in full, we are allowing those who are in arrears a one-time opportunity to request an installment plan. Please contact Lisa Thompson in the central office as soon as possible to set this up.

Your active participation in our society helps support the development of young pediatric nephrologists through awards and travel grant programs, and makes possible our workforce, public policy and educational efforts. All of these activities are vital to the future of the pediatric nephrology community.

ASPN Policy:

The due date for this year's dues is January 15, with a 30-day grace period. Members owing 1-2 years of membership fees that are not paid in full by February 15, 2008 will be changed to a "Suspended" status with a \$50 late fee to be assessed upon reinstatement.

Members owing 3 years or more of membership fees will be changed to a "Terminated" status and will be required to re-apply for membership with a \$50 re-application fee.

When a member is suspended or terminated all member benefits/privileges will cease.

Please note that the timing of the dues deadline reflects the time that was required to implement both new office procedures and these changed policies. In subsequent years, the due date will be earlier in the fiscal year.

PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS ON CLINICAL TRIAL GRANTS

The U34 (<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-08-057.html>) and U01 (<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-08-058.html>) PARs have been published.

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**JOB
OPPORTUNITIES!**

The ASPN Website
Has Multiple
Listings For
Positions Available
Within The Pediatric
Nephrology
Community.

VISIT THE ASPN
MARKETPLACE NOW... TO
SEE IF A POSITION IS RIGHT
FOR YOU!

WWW.ASPNEPH.COM

Announcements Continued...

COMING SOON...

ASPN CAREER CENTER

The American Society of Pediatric Nephrology is pleased to announce the near future launch of the ASPN Career Center, a new online resource designed to help you recruit qualified pediatric nephrology professionals.

The new ASPN Career Center will help streamline your hiring process with:

- Unmatched exposure for job listings.
- Easy online job management - You can enter job descriptions, check the status of postings, renew or discontinue postings, and even make payments online.
- Resume searching access - With a paid job listing, you can search the resume database and use an automatic notification system to receive email notifications when new resumes match your criteria.
- Department awareness - Along with each job posting, you can include information about your department or appropriate division and a link to your web site.
- Department discounts available for ASPN members.

Don't miss this unique opportunity to be seen by an exclusive audience of Pediatric Nephrology's best and brightest! An email will be sent out upon launching!

THANKS. ♦ ♦ ♦

To Our Members Who Volunteer Their Time and Energy

The ASPN would like to express appreciation to PAS and alliance members who have volunteered their time to review abstracts, chair sessions, present seminars and lectures at the 2007 Annual Meeting. Your time and energy assure our program continues to be a success.

And to our 2007 Annual Meeting Sponsors

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • Abbott | • IPHA |
| • Amgen, Inc. | • Sigma Tau |
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| • Genzyme Corporation | • American Society of Transplantation |
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Join Us In
HAWAII

2008

**PEDIATRIC ACADEMIC SOCIETIES AND THE
AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PEDIATRIC NEPHROLOGY**

ANNUAL MEETINGS ~ MAY 3-6, 2008
Honolulu, Hawaii

JOINTLY SPONSORED WITH:

*The Center For Continuing Education,
Tulane University Health Sciences Center*

BROADENING OUR HORIZONS

*This meeting is uniquely positioned
in a very special venue to encourage
participation from international alliances
and investigators around the world.*

Honolulu, Hawaii ~ **THE FACTS**

It's like Paradise

It may hit you when you're moving from one session to another in the open aired convention center sneaking a peek of the Pacific Ocean as you race to the next session; or maybe while you are reading your program guide, planning your day over a cappuccino and a fresh papaya on your hotel lanai; or possibly even while you're watching the sun fade over Diamond Head, or walking Waikiki Beach under a tropical moon, hearing the sweet melodies of a steel guitar. Suddenly you realize....You're here for business, yet you've never felt better in your life. Nowhere else can you breathe the very spirit of "Aloha." Nowhere else can you find a place like O'ahu.

Mixing Business with Pleasure

A once in a lifetime opportunity - a beautiful place to do business. Focus first on the exchange of ideas and foster collaborations then take time to share with your friends and family the beauty that this wonderful location has to offer.

Value that Benefits Everyone

Hawaii offers a beautiful state of the art convention facility at an exceptional value. This facility will serve as the perfect host to the busy PAS program and the savings allows PAS to offer increased support for trainee travel grants.

Over 150 travel grants will be given to young investigators through the PAS Abstract Submission.

**Housing and Registration
are NOW open**

Secure Early and SAVE!

Visit the PAS website for complete details www.pas-meeting.org

Airline Reservations

The PAS Travel Agency will utilize the best rates available offering fare discounts and zone fare access.

Hotel Accommodations

The Pediatric Academic Societies have negotiated special rates with select hotels for meeting attendees who make their reservations by Thursday, March 27th. All contracted hotels are ocean/beach front or within 1-2 blocks of the ocean.

Hilton Hawaiian Village (Headquarter Hotel)	\$220 - \$324
Ala Moana	\$151 - \$173
Doubletree Alana Waikiki	\$175 - \$195
Hawaii Prince	\$210
Royal Hawaiian-Sheraton	\$245 - \$335
Sheraton Moana Surfrider	\$235 - \$275
Sheraton Princess Kaiulani	\$175
Sheraton Waikiki	\$190 - \$230

Each hotel offers a mix of city and ocean view rooms.
Rates are subject to the state, local and occupancy taxes.

All reservations must be made through the official housing bureau. Hotels will not accept any reservations directly offering these rates. Secure housing on-line and receive instant confirmation.

Extend Your Stay and Experience Other Islands

Visit the PAS meeting website for information regarding pre or post trip travel packages and opportunities.

Meeting Registration

PAS Registration allows admittance to all PAS, ASPN, ASPR, LWPES and PIDS scientific sessions and the technical exhibits at the Hawaii Convention Center.

The PAS Meeting Registration Fee includes the Program Guide and Abstracts-on-Disk.TM. Individuals who register by April 1, 2008 will receive their badge and Program Guide via first class mail by **April 28, 2008**.

	Before 3/6	3/7-4/1	After 4/1
Members and Guests	\$370	\$420	\$470
Emeritus	\$140	\$140	\$140
Allied Health Professionals (Nondoctoral: RNs, NNP, RRT, Lab Techs, etc.)	\$295	\$345	\$395
Trainee (Student, Resident, Fellow in Training—letter of status required)	\$100	\$100	\$100

You May Register by Internet, Fax or Mail. Visit the PAS website to register on-line or to download the form.

Pre On-site Meeting Registration

Registration forms received after April 1st will be charged on-site registration fees. Meeting materials will not be mailed to anyone who registers after April 1st. These registrants may pick up their materials on site at the Advance Registration counter in the Hawaii Convention Center at PAS Registration.

Continuing Education Credits ~ This activity has been approved for AMA PRA Category I Credit.™

PAS Program Office ~ 3400 Research Forest Dr., Suite B-7 ~ The Woodlands, TX 77381
Phone: 281-419-0052 ~ Fax: 281-419-0082
URL: www.pas-meeting.org

American Society of Pediatric Nephrology
 May 3-6, 2008 ~ Honolulu, Hawaii ~ Hawaii Convention Center



Saturday, May 3	Sunday, May 4	Monday, May 5	Tuesday, May 6
<p>7:00am – 9:00am ASPN/PAS Workshop Career Advancement and Leadership Development – “Oh, the places you’ll go.”</p> <p>9:00am – 11:00am ASPN/ Chronic Kidney Disease Mineral and Bone Disorder (CKD- MBD): What are the Implications for Pediatrics</p>	<p>7:00am – 9:00am ASPN/IPHA/PAS Joint Symposia Imaging Modalities In Pediatric Hypertension</p> <p>9:00am – 11:00am ASPN Symposium Pediatric Renal Transplantation: Graft Loss— It’s More than Acute Rejection</p>	<p>7:00am – 8:00am Meet the Professor Breakfast</p> <p>8:00am – 10:00am ASPN/IPHA/LWPES Joint Symposia Prescribe With Caution: Understanding and Managing the Risks of Antihypertensive Agents</p> <p>10:15am – 12:15pm Platform Session III & IPHA (Abstracts)</p>	<p>7:00am – 9:00am ASPN Symposium Advances in the Evaluation and Management of Complement-based Renal Diseases</p> <p>9:15am – 11:15am ASPN Joint State of the Art Proteomics in Pediatric Kidney Disease</p>
<p>11:00am – 1:00pm Platform Session I (Abstracts)</p>	<p>11:15am – 1:15pm Poster Session II</p>	<p>12:30pm – 1:45pm ASPN Awards Luncheon</p>	<p>11:30pm – 1:30pm Joint Symposia ASPN/AST/UNOS/ IPTA/NASPGHAN Pediatric Solid Organ Transplantation: Impact of Donation and Allocation on Outcome</p>
<p>1:00pm – 2:30pm CPC Fellows Luncheon</p> <p>2:30pm – 4:30pm ASPN/ASPR Joint Symposia The Genetics of Renal Disease</p> <p>4:30pm – 6:15pm Poster Session I, Exhibits & PAS Opening Reception</p> <p>6:45pm – 8:15pm ASPN Member Reception</p>	<p>1:15pm – 3:15pm Platform Session II (Abstracts)</p> <p>3:30pm – 5:30pm ASPN Presidential Address & Business Meeting</p>	<p>2:00pm – 4:00pm ASPN Symposium Pathophysiology of Vesicoureteral Reflux (VUR)</p> <p>4:00pm – 6:00pm ASPN Workshop Research Networking for Progress in Children’s Health</p>	 <p>PAS Deadlines</p> <p>*****</p> <p>Original Science Abstract Submissions <i>December 4, 2007</i></p>
<p>Exhibits Open 3:00 – 6:30pm</p>	<p>Exhibits Open 11:00 – 3:00pm</p>	<p>Exhibits Open 3:00 – 6:45pm</p>	
<p>Council Meeting Friday 9-3 Committee Meetings 3-7</p>			

Washington Update

CONGRESS REACHES SHORT-TERM DEAL ON MEDICARE PAYMENT CUTS, CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE

On December 19, by a 411-3 vote, the House approved legislation (S. 2499) providing a six-month Medicare pay increase for physicians and extending funding for the State Children's Health Insurance Program through March 2009. The Senate approved the measure by unanimous consent December 18, and President Bush is expected to sign the legislation.

The bill would provide doctors a 0.5 percent payment increase through June 30, 2008, canceling a 10.1 percent cut scheduled to take effect January 1, 2008. Congress will have to address the issue again in mid-2008 to avoid yet another payment cut for doctors from taking effect July 1, 2008.

ASPN thanks its members for their advocacy efforts throughout 2007 on urging Congress to block Medicare physician payment cuts. The Society will continue to work with its congressional champions during 2008 on promoting a permanent fix to the Medicare payment formula.

AFTER CONTENTIOUS NEGOTIATIONS, CONGRESS PASSES CONSOLIDATED SPENDING BILL

The road to final passage for the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill was especially difficult this year. The bill, combined with 10 other unfinished appropriations bills, passed the House and Senate during the week of December 17. The massive \$555 billion spending measure was signed by President Bush on December 26.

House and Senate passage of the consolidated funding measure followed months of contentious negotiations between Democrats and Republicans in Congress. But clearly the controlling force in this budget battle was the President and his insistence that Congress not breach his overall budget request for discretionary spending and that there be no forced withdrawal from Iraq.

In the end, Democrats gave up on their efforts to add \$23 billion for a wide range of health, education and social services programs, settling instead for rearranging budget priorities within the President's overall spending ceiling.

The package includes \$146.3 billion to support discretionary programs funded in the Labor-HHS-Education section of the measure. For FY2008, the National Institutes of Health is funded at \$28.942 billion, an increase of \$133 million or .46%, and \$1 billion below the amount contained in the bill approved by Congress in November.

ASPN is happy to report that the appropriations package includes the Society's research report language regarding the need to conduct trans-institute trials to study methods to improve adherence with treatment regimens for children and adolescents throughout the spectrum of chronic kidney disease. The language, while not statutorily binding, serves as a guidepost for how the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Disease (NIDDK) should allocate its resources for specific scientific studies.



Submitted by:

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Washington Update Continued...

ASPEN SPEAKS OUT; CMS REVISES PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS FOR TRANSPLANT CENTERS

In November, the ASPEN sent the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) a letter requesting the agency provide a special exemption to the volume requirements under the new Medicare Conditions of Participation (CoP) for primarily pediatric transplant centers that also transplant small numbers of young adults. As a result of Society's efforts, as well as others in the pediatric transplant community, on December 14, CMS revised and clarified the interpretation of the Transplant CoP, including removal of the volume requirement for adults for reapproval of primarily pediatric transplant programs, who also transplant young adults. The CoP was also revised to not require pediatric programs to have separate approval to perform transplants on adults, as long as the number of adult transplants is less than 50% of the total volume in a 12-month period.

The details of the revised CoP can be viewed at http://www.cms.hhs.gov/CertificationandCompliance/20_Transplant.asp. Please click on *Clarification Regarding Application and Approval Process for Transplant Programs*, found under the Downloads section.

The ASPEN hopes this information will help you update your pediatric kidney transplant program approval requests appropriately.

ASPEN PARTICIPATES IN AMA RUC SURVEY OF ESRD G-CODES

ASPEN surveyed part of its membership to estimate physician work for sixteen new monthly capitation payment (MCP) CPT codes for pediatric ESRD-related physician services. Submission of survey data is an important part of ASPEN's participation in the AMA/Specialty Society RVS Update Committee (RUC), which has been charged with the responsibility of providing the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) with recommendations for updating Medicare's Resource Based Relative Value Scale (RBRVS).

ASPEN's participation in the AMA RUC survey process is crucial to the Society's efforts to ensure that physician payment policies are based on accurate information about the work involved in providing services to pediatric end-stage renal disease patients. ASPEN thanks those who participated, and will keep the membership updated on the outcome of the January AMA RUC meeting, where a summary of the survey data will be discussed and evaluated.

AMA CONSORTIUM APPROVES OF PEDIATRIC ESRD QUALITY MEASURE

In November, the American Medical Association's Physician Consortium for Performance Improvement's® (PCPI) Executive Committee formally approved the pediatric end-stage renal disease measure topic related to hemodialysis adequacy. The approval of this measure topic submitted by ASPEN allows the AMA PCPI to formally proceed with the creation of a pediatric ESRD workgroup to develop and test a hemodialysis adequacy quality measure related to the treatment of children with kidney failure. The co-chairs of the AMA PCPI pediatric ESRD workgroup are Dr. William Haley, from the Renal Physicians Association, and Dr. Barbara Fivush from the ASPEN. The AMA PCPI will solicit work group members over the coming month. This workgroup will be charged with reviewing aspects of care and guidelines related to pediatric hemodialysis adequacy. If all goes according to plan, pediatric nephrologists will have a quality measure ready for implementation by January 2009.

Washington Update Continued...

LONG-AWAITED GAO REPORT RELEASED ON PEDIATRIC AND YOUNG ADULT TRANSPLANTATION

A recent Government Accountability Office (GAO) report publicly released in November by Senators Charles E. Grassley, Max Baucus, Christopher J. Dodd, and former Senator Mike DeWine, reports that transplant recipients who were under 18 years old when transplanted but are now adults (transitional recipients), are more likely than their pediatric and adult counterparts to experience a transplant failure and subsequently receive dialysis. The study, entitled *Characteristics of Kidney Transplant Recipients, Frequency of Transplant Failures, and Cost to Medicare* (GAO-07-1117), was conducted in response to calls to Congress from the ASPN and American Society of Transplantation asking for further evaluation of post-transplant care in the pediatric and young adult end-stage kidney disease populations.

The GAO report also found that beneficiaries with functioning transplants were substantially less costly to Medicare than those with transplant failures. However, the report concluded that the percentage increase in transplant failures from 1 year to 3 years post transplant experienced by transitional recipients cannot be attributed to their inability to obtain immunosuppressive medications when Medicare coverage ceases after 36 months. ASPN is in the process of working with the congressional requesters of the study on exploring the possibility of further evaluating the data behind the study's conclusions.

Committee Updates

CLINICAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Joseph Flynn, Chair

Changes in Medicare Part D for 2008

The ASPN has received information from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) regarding changes to Medicare part D (prescription drug coverage) for 2008. The most important of these from a pediatric perspective is improved coverage for vaccines and vaccine administration. CMS has also created detailed guidelines for patients who switch part D plans to ensure that they continue to receive medications during the transition between plans. Dr. Mark Rodgers, Director of CMS Physician's Regulatory Issues Team, has prepared a detailed briefing on the major changes which has been posted on the Clinical Affairs Section of the ASPN website. We recommend that you download the full article and pass it along to your unit's Social Worker and/or other staff members involved with insurance issues.

ASPN Submits Comments on Proposed Surveyor Guidelines

As many ASPN members are no doubt aware, new conditions for coverage (CfC's) for ESRD programs have been set by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and are expected to take effect in February 2008. CfC's are the minimum health and safety rules that all Medicare and Medicaid participating dialysis facilities must meet. The existing ESRD CfC's were actually issued back in 1976!

ASPN Leadership

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Committee Updates Continued...

Issuing the CfC's is just one part of this important regulatory change. Another document that is key to implementing the CfC's is revision of the Appendix H of the State Operations Manual, "Guidance to Surveyors." This manual establishes guidelines that are followed by regulatory personnel from state Health departments when they conduct surveys of individual ESRD facilities.

Draft Surveyor Guidelines were issued by CMS at the end of October, and were reviewed by members of the Clinical Affairs Committee right after the ASN meeting. We were fortunate that Stuart Goldstein was able to obtain for us a copy of very detailed comments that had been prepared by the Forum of ESRD networks. Based upon this plus additional comments from Clinical Affairs, ASPN was able to submit detailed comments to CMS within a short time-frame. We will continue to monitor this process and will alert ASPN members when the CfC's take effect and the new Surveyor Guidelines are available.

WORKFORCE COMMITTEE

Elaine Kamil, Sharon Bartosh, David Kershaw, co-chairs

The ASPN Workforce committee is working on strategies to increase recruitment of trainees to pediatric nephrology. Figuring that our patients are some of the best ambassadors for pediatric nephrology, we are going to try to place medical students and pediatric residents in some of the "kidney camps" across the country. Matt Grinsell of the University of Utah is spearheading this effort. Please email Matt at matt.grinsell@hsc.utah.edu with your local camp information especially including contact information for the camp's volunteer coordinator. We will communicate with the camps, medical schools, and pediatric departments to set up the program, but will certainly need your help with your local camp.

Work continues with our expansion of the state lists of active pediatric nephrologists. If you are a state liaison, please update your state list (especially email information) ASAP on all of the pediatric nephrologists in your state, and forward that list to Lisa Thompson at lthompson@aspneph.com.

Please join us at the next workforce committee meeting at the PAS meeting in Hawaii in May and/or email your suggestions to elaine.kamil@cshs.org, smbartosh@facstaff.wisc.edu, or dkershaw@umich.edu.

COMING SOON...

AN IMPORTANT SURVEY AND USEFUL TOOLS FROM THE PRACTICE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE

In an effort to better understand and meet the needs of our members, we will be sending a brief survey soon with approximately 8 questions about your practice. Please take a few moments to answer these questions and let us know how we can assist you with coding, billing, documentation, or other aspects of practice management.

While we can't increase reimbursement rates, by providing tools for appropriate billing, coding and documentation, we may be able to help you increase the chances that you'll be reimbursed for the work you do. We are in the process of posting some of these tools on our website. Please check it periodically for updates. We continue to welcome specific questions from the membership. Questions will be answered directly (i.e. soon) and answers also subsequently published in upcoming KIDney Notes issues.

Meeting Announcements

Welcome New Members!!

Joshua Samuels

University of Texas

Medical School

Houston, TX

Patricia Weng

Mount Sinai School

of Medicine

New York, NY

Christoph Licht

The Hospital for

Sick Children

Ontario, CA

Sudha Garimella

Women & Childrens

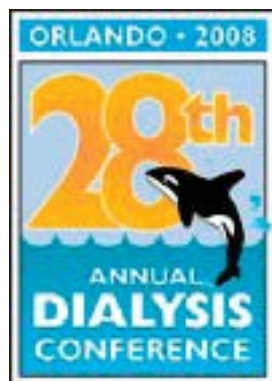
Hospital of Buffalo

Buffalo, NY

Amy Staples

University of New Mexico

Albuquerque, NM



28th Annual

Dialysis Conference

March 1-4, 2008

Rosen Shingle Creek Resort

Orlando, Florida

Visit <http://som.missouri.edu/dialysis>

for more information



**THE MIAMI PEDIATRIC NEPHROLOGY SEMINAR
(FOUNDED BY JOSE STRAUSS M.D.) IS COMING AGAIN
MARCH 6-9, 2008**

Visit <http://pediatricnephrology.med.miami.edu/seminar>
for more information.

5th International Conference
**on Pediatric Continuous
Renal Replacement Therapy**

Thursday - Saturday, June 19 - 21, 2008
Disney's Contemporary Resort
Orlando, Florida

To learn more contact Carol Malone, coordinator
256-232-2865 or cmalone@pcinet.net



Helen DeVos
children's hospital

PCRRT 2008



**SAVE THE DATES! ASMB 2008
Annual Meeting**

- Amercia Society for Matrix Biology

December 7-10, 2008 Detailed information
on registration and call for abstracts will be
on the ASMB website at www.asmb.net.