

CLEARING THE FOG

An Immersive Look at Neurosurgery's Demands

Manual for Summer Multimedia Experience

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Welcome to "Clearing the Fog," an immersive educational experience designed as part of the KA 220 Neurodecision program funded by Erasmus+. This activity aims to provide senior medical students with an authentic perspective on the demanding lifestyle realities of pursuing a career in neurosurgery.

Participating Institutions

- **Lead Institution:** Humanitas University
 - **Partners:**
 - International Neuroscience Institute (Hannover, Germany)
 - Univerzitet u Beogradu (Belgrade, Serbia)
 - Lusiadas Hospital Porto (Porto, Portugal)
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PROGRAM RATIONALE

Neurosurgery represents one of medicine's most challenging specialties, requiring exceptional:

- Technical and non-technical skills
- Unwavering focus
- Extraordinary commitment
- Ability to manage high-stress situations

The field experiences notably high attrition rates, particularly in the first years of residency. A primary contributing factor is the significant lifestyle sacrifices and stress levels that neurosurgeons endure throughout their careers.

This program is designed to provide medical students considering neurosurgery with unvarnished insights into these realities before they commit to this demanding path. We believe that students who proceed with a clear understanding of these challenges are better positioned to persist through the rigorous training process.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

1. Required Reading

"Do No Harm: Stories of Life, Death and Brain Surgery" by Henry Marsh

This compelling memoir offers candid reflections from a neurosurgeon on:

- The triumphs and tragedies of neurosurgical practice
- Ethical dilemmas faced when operating on the human brain
- The personal toll of life-and-death decision-making
- The fragility of life and resilience of the human spirit

2. Required Film Viewings

You will watch films/documentaries that humanize the neurosurgical experience:

A. "Concussion" (2015)

- Follows Dr. Bennet Omalu's discovery of CTE in football players
- Highlights the challenges of advocating for scientific truth
- Explores the personal and professional costs of challenging established institutions

B. "Gifted Hands: The Ben Carson Story" (2010)

- Chronicles the journey of renowned neurosurgeon Dr. Ben Carson
- Demonstrates the dedication required to excel in the field
- Explores work-life balance challenges in high-stakes medicine

C. "Sacred Brain, The Surgeon's Cut" (Season 1, Episode 2, 2020)

- Features Dr. Alfredo Quinones-Hinojosa ("Dr. Q")

- Provides an intimate look at modern neurosurgical practice
- Documents on the emotional weight of treating patients with brain conditions

3. Reflection and Feedback

After completing the readings and viewings, you will:

- Complete a mandatory questionnaire (Google Forms)
- Participate in an online debriefing session with neurosurgeon tutors

EXAMPLE OF TIMELINE

Date	Milestone
July 27, 2025	Materials distribution and questionnaire access provided
July 27 - August 31, 2025	Self-paced completion of readings and film viewings
August 31, 2025	DEADLINE: Survey submission
September 19, 2025	Online debriefing session with neurosurgeon tutors

ACCESS TO MATERIALS

Reading Material

"Do No Harm: Stories of Life, Death and Brain Surgery"

- English version: [Amazon Link](#)
- Italian version: [Amazon Link](#)

Films/Documentaries

"Concussion" (2015)

- [Prime Video](#)
- [Netflix](#)

"Gifted Hands" (2010)

- [Prime Video](#)
- [Apple TV](#)

"The Surgeon's Cut (Dr. Q)" (2020)

- [Netflix](#)

Questionnaire

- [Google Forms Link](#)
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PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS

Student Responsibilities

1. **Complete all assigned materials** within the specified timeline
2. **Submit the survey** within the specified timeline
3. **Participate in the debriefing session** on the specified day
4. **Reflect honestly** on how the materials impact the perception of neurosurgery as a career

Questionnaire Guidelines

- The questionnaire is **mandatory** for all participants
- Responses will provide crucial data for the program evaluation
- Encourage students to be candid about how the materials influence their perception of neurosurgery
- The feedback will help improve future iterations of this program

Debriefing Session

- Establish a date and time convenient for tutors and students of all centers
 - Format: Online meeting (link will be provided after questionnaire submission)
 - Participants: All students and neurosurgeon tutors from partner institutions
 - Purpose: Discussion of insights, questions, and reflections on the materials
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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this program, participants will:

1. Gain realistic insights into the daily challenges faced by neurosurgeons
2. Understand the lifestyle sacrifices commonly required in the field

3. Recognize the emotional and psychological demands of neurosurgical practice
 4. Develop informed perspectives on their suitability for this career path
 5. Make more educated decisions about pursuing neurosurgery residency
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CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions or technical issues regarding:

Program Content: [Provide Program Coordinator Contact Information]

Technical Support: [Provide Technical Support Contact Information]

Submission Issues: [Provide Administrative Contact Information]

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This educational initiative is made possible through funding from Erasmus+ as part of the KA 220 - Neurodecision program. We express our gratitude to all partner institutions and contributing neurosurgical educators for their commitment to preparing the next generation of medical professionals.

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