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International Neuromodulation Society Announces Public Education Funding

SAN FRANCISCO (April 26, 2012) – The International Neuromodulation Society (INS) announced today a \$25,000 grant from Boston Scientific to support the INS’s public education program.

The grant will help the society increase awareness, training and education about the growing field of neuromodulation, its treatments, technologies, innovations and benefits. The society previously received \$100,000 from Medtronic, Inc. and \$25,000 from St. Jude Medical, Inc.

The society is expanding its role as a provider of neutral, credible information about neuromodulation. Through its regional chapters, conferences, and scientific journal, the INS has been advancing an evidence base for the use of neuromodulation therapies to relieve chronic pain, restore function, and manage symptoms of neurological disorders. Now it is developing materials for patients, primary care physicians, the news media, health care specialists, legislators and the general public.

“The society is spreading the word about how scientists, engineers, physicians and providers share expertise and best practices to help manage long-term conditions and assist people around the globe,” said Dr. Simon Thomson, president of the INS and a lead consultant at the Pain Management Centre at Basildon and Thurrock University NHS Trust in the U.K. “The public education program will make neuromodulation therapies more familiar and encourage the highest standard of care. As the population ages, we expect neuromodulation to become common and well-known.”

Perhaps one of the best-known examples of neuromodulation is a treatment for Parkinson’s disease, in which precisely targeted electrical stimulation using a brain implant can lessen tremor and improve quality of life. This use of deep brain stimulation was approved in 1997. The therapy has been used to control motor symptoms in some 100,000 Parkinson’s disease patients worldwide. Other forms of neuromodulation include drug pumps that deliver pain or spasticity-relief medication directly to the nervous system where it is needed, and stimulation of muscles to restore movement after a stroke or injury. Cochlear implants, used by more than 200,000 people worldwide, stimulate the auditory nerve to bypass damaged sensory cells in the inner ear, and represent another example of neuromodulation.

An increasingly large use of neurostimulation has been to stimulate the nerves, spinal cord or brain to reduce chronic pain. This reversible, patient-controlled therapy relies on pacemaker-like devices.

With funding from the three main providers of neuromodulation devices, the INS hired its first public education and website manager, is expanding its web presence with breaking news and customized content from experts in the field, and is working through chapter leadership to develop enhanced training programs.

About the International Neuromodulation Society

The International Neuromodulation Society (INS) is a non-profit group of clinicians, scientists and engineers dedicated to the scientific development and awareness of neuromodulation – the alteration of nerve activity through the delivery of electrical stimulation or chemical agents to targeted sites of the body. Founded in 1989 and based in San Francisco, Calif., the INS educates and promotes the field through meetings, its journal *Neuromodulation* and chapter websites. For more information, please visit www.neuromodulation.com.

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