Neurosurgical Care

An Interview with Daniel M. Sciubba, MD,
Senior Vice President of Neurosurgery, Northwell Health,
and Chair of Neurosurgery, Donald and Barbara Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell

EDITORS' NOTE *Dr. Daniel Sciubba also serves as the Chair, Department of Neurosurgery, at North Shore University Hospital (NSUH) and Long Island Jewish (LIJ) Medical Center and as Co-Director of Northwell Health's Institute for Neurology and Neurosurgery. Dr. Sciubba came to Northwell from Johns Hopkins University (JHU) School of Medicine where he served as professor of neurosurgery, orthopedic surgery, oncology, radiation oncology, and molecular radiation sciences. He also served as JHU's director of spinal tumor and deformity surgery, as well as director of the multidisciplinary spinal oncology board and clinic. Dr. Sciubba received his medical degree from the College of Physicians & Surgeons at Columbia University and an MBA from the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania. His post-doctoral training included a residency in neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital and two complex spine fellowships at JHU and Shriners Children's Hospital in Philadelphia.*

Dr. Daniel M. Sciubba

Will you provide an overview of your role and areas of focus?

I currently serve as the Lucille and Milton Cohn Professor and Chair of Neurosurgery at the Donald and Barbara Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell, the senior vice president of neurosurgery at Northwell Health, chair of neurosurgery at North Shore University Hospital and Long Island Jewish Medical Center, and the Co-Director of the Institute for Neurology and Neurosurgery at Northwell Health. These roles provide me the extraordinary opportunity to lead one of the largest academic neurosurgery departments in the country. As such, I am responsible for the strategic, operational, quality, and financial initiatives for every neurosurgery team in the system.

Will you discuss Northwell Health's strength and leadership in neurosurgery?

Northwell Health is home to one of the most extensive and innovative neurosurgery programs in the country. Our neurosurgeons are globally recognized in their respective subspecialties and expertly treat a wide variety of neurosurgical issues – from routine procedures to the rare and complex. We also have initiated many pioneering research programs and experimental therapies.

Will you highlight the breadth and depth of Northwell Health's neurosurgery capabilities?

There is no other neurosurgery department in our region that has the breadth of Northwell. From northern Westchester County to eastern Suffolk County, we provide excellent neurosurgical care for both the brain and the spine. In addition, we have multiple local teams in New York City, Westchester, Staten Island, Nassau County, and Suffolk County that provide a depth of skill that matches or exceeds what is offered at other institutions. This combination allows us to treat more neurosurgical patients than any other system in New York.

How is technology impacting the field of neurosurgery and helping advance treatment?

Advancing technology has been present in neurosurgery from the genesis of the field itself. From spine surgery to interventions for stroke and other vascular diseases to treatments for brain tumors and healing functional disease such as Parkinson's, more and more options are available because of the impact of technology. More advanced imaging modalities and artificial intelligence will create even more pathways in the future where previously treatments might not have existed or would not have been optimal.

How important is cross-disciplinary collaboration in creating neurosurgery treatment plans that are customized to produce an optimal result?

Cross-disciplinary collaboration is vital in every aspect of neurosurgical care. The care of the brain and spine is so closely connected to multiple specialties including neurology, oncology, psychiatry, orthopedics and physical medicine, and rehabilitation just to name a few. In addition to the physician specialties, there needs to be close collaboration with advanced care providers, nursing, technicians, facility staff, and administration to ensure that patients are cared for to the greatest extent possible.

What are you most excited about as you look to the future of neurosurgery?

The future of neurosurgery is incredibly bright as the research that is being done every day in neuroscience has the potential to revolutionize treatment options in multiple areas in neurosurgery. Over the next decade we are bound to see advances in treatments for brain and spine cancer, brain vessel disease, and functional neurological conditions such as essential tremor and Parkinson's. Such treatments will fundamentally change how patients and their families deal with debilitating neurological conditions, and in many cases, we are allowing for complete cures. I feel honored to be part of this incredible community that is at the cutting edge of medicine. ●

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