

# AO Spine Middle East and Northern Africa Spine Centers—Guidelines

## Introduction

AO Spine Middle East and Northern Africa (AO SMENA) intends to develop a prestigious clinical network. All centers that fulfill the criteria as defined below may be granted the status of AO SMENA Spine Center.

The Spine Center status indicates that a center provides an AO SMENA approved standard of training, education or research. Centers will also be eligible to host AO Spine short-term fellowships and, when applicable, to participate in AO SMENA research and educational initiatives.

## Goals

The intended goals are the following:

- Develop a region-wide network of AO SMENA Spine Centers
- Induce collaboration across this network
- Deliver high quality AO SMENA fellowships that benefit the entire AO SMENA community
- Further develop the AO SMENA brand's academic standing and visibility throughout the spine care community

## Application

Interested centers must complete the application form on the AO Spine website, demonstrating that they meet the following criteria:

|  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Program Director   | <a href="#">AO Spine member</a> |
| Number of cases per annum  | 200                             |
| Number of instrumented cases per annum                           | 100                             |
| Minimum number of dedicated spine surgeons                       | 3                               |
| Applied, basic or clinical research publications in past 3 years | 2                               |

Each center must demonstrate outstanding educational and teaching capabilities. The application must be completed by an AO Spine member working at the center. The application will be submitted to the AO SMENA Spine Centers & Fellowships Officer.

## Authorization & Audit

The AO SMENA Spine Centers & Fellowships Officer is responsible for the authorization and audit of each Spine Center. He or she will work together with each AO SMENA Country Council Spine Centers & Fellowships Officer as appropriate.

## AO Spine Middle East Spine Centers—Terms & Conditions

### Parties

The parties to this agreement are the following:

- AO Spine Middle East and Northern Africa, hereafter "AO SMENA"
- The hospital, clinic or other institution applying for designation as an AO SMENA Spine Center, hereafter the "Center"

### AO SMENA'S obligations

AO SMENA has the following obligations:

- Organize short-term fellowships in collaboration with the Center and fellows, for which only the fellows shall receive a stipend to cover their living costs
- Provide AO SMENA educational materials

### Center's obligations

- Host and teach fellows for a period of between one and twelve weeks per fellow
- Support each fellow in securing local accommodation and other basic living requirements
- Provide a surgeon tutor/mentor to ensure each fellow is achieving goals mentioned in the application form
- Provide teaching / library facilities and equipment to aid each fellow's training
- Notify AOSpine immediately if the fellow is failing in his/her responsibilities
- Fully complete and return an AO SMENA 'Spine Center Feedback' form for each fellow
- Ensure that all data provided to AO SMENA about the Center is maintained at all times as a current, true and fair reflection of the Center's practices and capabilities
- Promote AO SMENA, including but not limited to the distribution and presentation of AO SMENA promotional and educational materials and the acknowledgement of AO SMENA clinical network membership through the Center's own online and print promotional and educational materials
- Allow members of AO SMENA to attend the Center at any time in an official capacity for the purpose of conducting an audit of the Center

The obligations as indicated above are performed by the Center for no compensation.

### Intellectual property

The Center must identify any intellectual property created by an AO SMENA fellow during his or her assignment at the Center and immediately thereafter inform AO SMENA, no later than 30 days after identification of the intellectual property.

The Center is obliged to have any and all rights in such intellectual property transferred to the AO SMENA within the same term (i.e. 30 days after the identification of the intellectual property) to the extent legally possible and without limitation.

### Duration

The agreement between AO SMENA and the Center will take effect only upon approval in writing of the Center's application by the AO SMENA Spine Center & Fellowships Officer and will remain valid for a period of 3 years from the date of approval. It can be extended upon re-application and re-approval by the AO SMENA Spine Center & Fellowships Officer. AO SMENA may terminate the agreement in writing in the following circumstances, provided that the Center has failed to remedy these circumstances within 30 day

- In the event that the Center neither fully nor in a timely manner meets its obligations as detailed in this agreement
- In the event that the Center is subject to bankruptcy proceedings, malpractice proceedings or other equivalent adverse events

### Confidentiality

Both parties hereby acknowledge that by virtue of this agreement they shall have direct or indirect access to and acquire knowledge of confidential information belonging to the other party. Both parties commit to maintain in confidence all information of the other party and not to use, disclose, reproduce or dispose of any information in any manner other than that expressly provided for in this agreement or upon prior approval in writing by the other party.

### Miscellaneous

The Center shall not be entitled to represent AO SMENA or to utilize trademarks of AO SMENA unless approved by AO SMENA in writing.

The liability of AO SMENA in connection with this agreement shall be restricted to the fullest extent possible by law. The Center shall indemnify, defend and hold harmless AO SMENA, to the fullest extent permitted by law, against any cause of action, all liabilities, losses, costs or expenses

(including reasonable fees and expenses of legal counsel) with respect to any claim, whether threatened, asserted, accrued or contingent, by third parties, arising out of the Center's failure to perform its obligations under this agreement in any respect.

Neither party shall assign its rights and obligations under this agreement without the other party's prior written consent.