



BRACHYTHERAPY

Seventh GEC-ESTRO workshop: Adopt, Adapt, Advance

21 - 22 November 2019, Budapest, Hungary

The 7th annual workshop organised by the Groupe Européen de Curiethérapie (GEC) and the European Society for Radiotherapy and Oncology (ESTRO) was held with the theme "Adopt, Adapt, Advance".

During the first session, named BRACHY-HERO, the poor availability of brachytherapy globally was emphasised, and another aspect mentioned was the heterogeneity of the practice of brachytherapy for cervical cancer across Europe.

On the second day, the presentations were well organised and I appreciated the decision to repeat many of them, so that everyone could attend the whole programme. The presentation about 3D-printed applicators for gynaecology was very interesting. It showed that virtually any dosimetry could be achieved in the pelvic region, once the radiation oncologist knew how to individualise the making of applicators.

In the UroGEC session, a presentation regarding prostate high-dose-rate monotherapy single dose concluded that the treatment resulted in high recurrence rates, even with 23Gy/1f and the failures often occurred in field. In the gastrointestinal GEC session there was an explanation of an interesting liver brachytherapy, which required a spacer to spare the stomach. The local ablation of tumours was effective and safe, and the healthy liver volume exposed was significantly lower than that achieved in stereotactic ablative radiotherapy (SABR). Also, there was a presentation about the role of the pre-treatment MRI, which indicated successful prediction of the pathological response of the tumour using radiomics.

In the skin session, many cases were presented, showing how diverse the flaps, personalised moulds and treatment could be. I think one of the best presentations was about the evolution of accelerated partial breast irradiation (APBI) and the future of very accelerated partial breast irradiation (VAPBI), which showed the difficulties of shifting the paradigm of a well-established treatment.

The sponsors were very kind and patient during the breaks as they explained how various applicators worked. The venue was suitable for the number of participants and presentations.

I highly recommend participation in such events because you meet a group of people with very focused vision and interest. Also, you get the chance to network with some of the best experts in brachytherapy.

To conclude, this was a thought-provoking event, which caused me to reflect that if you have enough courage, a brachytherapy source, the right applicators and knowledge of the anatomy, you can treat almost any site. My favourite quote from the event was:

"Work hard to strengthen your skills - technology will follow you!"



Andrei Ciobanu

Radiation oncology resident

"Prof. Dr. Ion Chiricuța" Cluj-Napoca Institute of Oncology

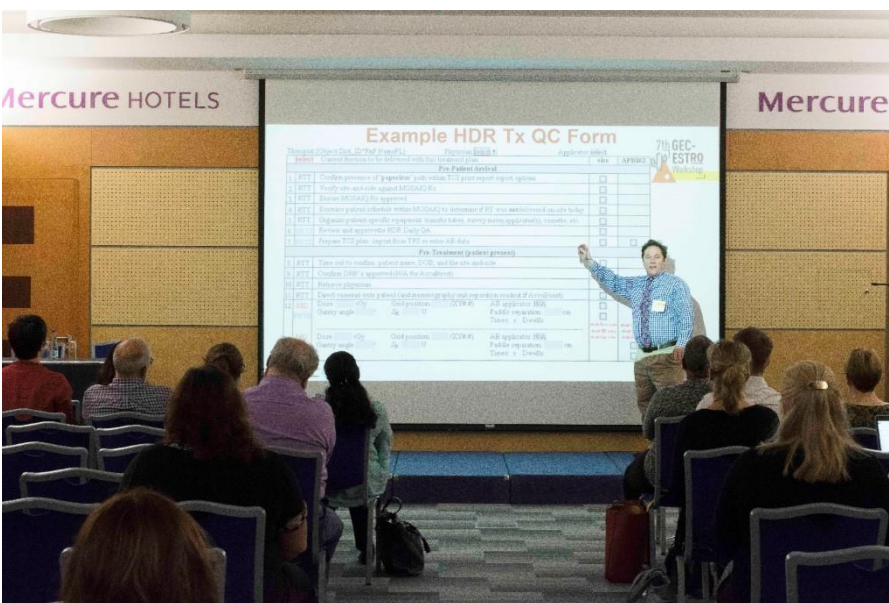
Cluj-Napoca Romania



Bradley Pieters opening the workshop



Breakout session



Breakout session





Participants in plenary session