



SCHOOL

Advanced Planning Treatment

22-26 September 2019 – Budapest, Hungary

COURSE DIRECTOR

Gert Meijer, medical physicist, University Medical Center Utrecht, Utrecht (The Netherlands)

CO-CHAIR

Neil Burnet, radiation oncologist, University of Manchester and The Christie, Manchester (UK)

Could you please briefly introduce yourself?

My name is Guraliuc Nicoleta and I work as a physicist at the Amethyst Radiotherapy Center in Bucharest, Romania. I have five years of experience in radiotherapy and I also work as a physicist in nuclear medicine.

Why did you choose to attend this course?

Continuous professional development is very important to me, so I'm always on the lookout for practical, hands-on courses in which I can see how other physicists approach some of the difficulties we face. I also wanted to practise on other treatment planning systems (TPSs) and learn about the latest developments in the system we already use. The Advanced Planning Treatment course run by the European Society for Radiotherapy and Oncology (ESTRO), which a colleague recommended to me, fully met my expectations.

What aspects of the course were the most interesting and why?

I really enjoyed the practical aspect of the course. The case studies were well chosen and at times challenging for everyone. I would like to thank those who picked these cases as they kept our minds busy in the afternoons ☺. Discussion of these cases was also a valuable opportunity to share tips and tricks.

It was helpful that after each practice session we discussed the case and compared what could be obtained with the use of different techniques. I noticed some cases of tomotherapy and proton therapy (particularly interesting).

Did the course activities improve your knowledge and skills in the relevant subject?

This course was an important source of new ideas that I can surely implement in my daily work. I came back with some new skills to improve my work. I'm grateful to be part of a dynamic team that is open to new ideas. Our purpose is to do the best for our patients, and in order to achieve that, we keep up good communication between doctors and physicists, so we always discuss and share new ideas to use in practice. I also took this message back home with me: "It is much better to have a living patient with a dry mouth than a dead patient who spits."

Did the course meet your expectations? If so, how?

To be honest I came with high expectations and I was really impressed by how well the course was organised. I appreciated the presence in the classroom of a mix of physicists who worked on different TPSs and had different levels of experience. This offered us the chance to learn from each other and hold interesting conversations.

List three important 'takeaways' following the course.

- Focus on physical dose individualisation and attention to detail; this will bring benefits for patients
- Pay attention to reduction of dose toxicity
- It is important to balance the increased risk of irradiating a larger volume against the reduced risk of organ damage

How can what you have learnt be implemented in your daily job/ clinical practice?

I learned that a good plan is one which accomplishes all the important objectives without compromising the coverage of the planning target volume. Of course, there are situations in which this is impossible, but if we have good communication with the doctors, they will always guide us in the right direction because each case is different, and we need to adapt to every patient. Individualisation is the key.

How would you encourage someone who has never been to an ESTRO course to join this course next year/ in two years?

In my opinion this course is for those who want to improve their knowledge and skills. It is useful because you can practise on other TPSs and of course new tips are welcome to everyone.

I am certain I will return to this course at some point in the future. I hope more doctors will attend, because the exchange of views between doctors and physicists always bring benefits.



Course participants





Course in session



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