



SCHOOL

Multidisciplinary Management of Brain Tumours

1-3 December 2019, Brussels, Belgium.

Could you please briefly introduce yourself?

My name is Sara Alkner and I work as an oncologist in Skåne University Hospital, Sweden. I was awarded my specialist degree in oncology two years ago (in Sweden the training for radiation and medical oncology is the same) and have worked in radiotherapy since then. Just recently I have joined the neuro-oncology team and I am currently working with both radiation and medical treatment of brain tumours.

Why did you choose to attend this course? (please mention if it's your ESTRO course)

With this course I wanted to increase further my knowledge of brain tumours with a special focus on radiotherapy. This was also why I chose a European SocieTy for Radiotherapy and Oncology (ESTRO) course, since I have found on other previous courses that focused on central nervous system (CNS) tumours that the radiotherapy part was sometimes handled quite briefly.

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

I was especially interested to hear more about challenging cases, re-irradiation, normal tissue tolerance, and rare tumour types. Re-irradiation is a very challenging area which often causes discussion and sometimes disagreement between colleagues. Since I work at a large university hospital we now and then also see rare tumour types, for which guidelines are not always available, and it was interesting to learn more about their treatment.

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

The course offered useful repetition of the basic parts of neuro-oncology. I also increased my knowledge of rare diagnoses, and really enjoyed the chance to discuss difficult cases with the faculty and other course participants.

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

I believe it did. If anything, I would have enjoyed an even deeper review of difficult areas of radiotherapy for CNS malignancies, for example the possibility of re-irradiation.

List three important 'takeaways' following the course.

- Genomics and molecular biology are essential today for classification and treatment of brain tumours, and their importance will most probably continue to increase in the future.
- Re-irradiation offers a possible course of treatment, but only once other options have been explored and then with caution.
- Despite a wide range of clinical trials, we are still struggling to find new effective treatments for glioblastoma.

How will what you have learnt be implemented in your daily job/clinical practice? (if applicable)

I especially found helpful the discussions with the faculty regarding margins of clinical target volumes for some rare tumour types, and I will implement their recommendations in my clinical work.

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

This course brings you up-to-date on the subject of CNS malignancies. In addition, it was an excellent opportunity to discuss difficult cases and treatment issues with experienced members of the faculty and to meet colleagues from all over Europe.



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