

The annual National Societies Day that took place in Brussels on 14 April 2008. It was as usual a good opportunity to meet all the society's partners across Europe and discuss important issues.

2008 National Societies Day

Every year, ESTRO is delighted to welcome all the European national societies to Brussels to share ideas, listen to feedback from the national societies and to provide updates on ESTRO initiatives and projects. The 2008 edition of the National Societies Day took place on 14 April and 26 societies, from all parts of Europe, were represented. A range of topics were tackled this year, mostly focusing on Education and Safety and provoking detailed discussion - but, nevertheless we managed to finish on time!

Core Curriculum

Jan Willem Leer speaking for clinicians believes that ESTRO should provide guidelines of CC for individual countries to implement according to their national needs. Knowledge is an important part of the new CC but it must also include other competencies especially communication, organisation and management.

Dag Rhune Olsen, representing Physicists, said that the major need in the Physics CC is to rethink the radiation physics as applied to radiation oncology. A draft should be ready in about 12 months.

For RTTs, the work on CC was presented by Mary Coffey and a draft will also be ready within a year. The main issue is to match professional titles with corresponding responsibilities as the nomenclature used across the EU is not the same.

At the end of these very interesting presentations, it was agreed that working parties should exchange members to facilitate harmonisation between the different groups.

Education

Christine Verfaillie from ESTRO gave an overview of the society's teaching courses. The number of participants has increased between 2000 and 2008, both from within the expanded EU and non-European countries. Christine explained that an extension of educational activities was planned including: e-learning; the development of some courses, for example pre-meeting courses; collaboration with other societies and the extension of courses outside Europe. The TTG (Technology Transfer Grants), in particular, the fact that they are open to all disciplines and that the deadline of application is 30 September 2008 were also discussed.

Christine announced that ESRO (the ESTRO School of Radiotherapy and Oncology) will be launched at ESTRO 27 next September, and Richard Pötter then talked about the importance of creating a framework for educational activities within ESRO.

Site Visits during RT Training

J.W. Leer and D. Kardamakis reported on the first site visit to Patras during a teaching course in Athens. The purpose of the visit was to provide recommendations to help the department and also, to pave the way for better understanding of the RT situation across Europe which will be further clarified after the next scheduled visit to Poland.

ESTRO Logbook

The ESTRO logbook, which is a web-based database that can create reports was presented by Marcel Stam. Currently under test in the Netherlands, the system is very user friendly and some future developments are planned, including uploads of documents, patients' data and statistics. Available at www.estro.org, the general format has been developed by ESTRO, but new menus can be added by national societies if needed.

Strategies on Safety and Quality Assurance in Radiation Oncology

Boguslaw Maciejewski shared his experience in Poland where clinical audits on RT procedures are being undertaken in collaboration with the ministry of health via ESTRO.

Jean Bourhis reported from France, where the Epinal accident has had severe effects. This has contributed to the development of RT-QA processes at national level and to the implementation of several changes to increase safety, quality and security.

Finally, Norman Willich reported on the German experience where a pilot project has been started to provide safety in RT and to information collection and collation.

ROSIS (*Radiation Oncology Safety Information System*)

Mary Coffey reported on the ROSIS project, which is a voluntary web based information database for Radiotherapy, created to report incidents and so, improve safety in RT. ROSIS is technically supported by ESTRO and can be translated into several languages. National societies can collaborate and use the system.

ESTRO Website

Michel Taillet presented the project of the new ESTRO website. This new version of www.estro.org will be redesigned and have its content renovated. The main innovation will be the creation of a platform of information on RT that will be included in the website.

Dedicated to professionals of oncology but also to patients, media and decision makers, the website and the RT information platform are planned to be launched in September at ESTRO 27.

Summary

In summary, the meeting was very productive, with lively debate in a friendly atmosphere. Thank you to everyone who attended. We look forward to hosting another event next year. There will, no doubt, be much more to discuss at the 2009 National Societies Day.