



BRACHYTHERAPY

GEC-ESTRO Workshop 2022

“Improving Brachytherapy Together”

1-2 December 2022, Nice, France

Report on the gynae lectures

My name is Diana-Cristina Pop. I am a brachytherapy medical physicist at the Institute of Oncology “Prof. Dr. Ion Chiricuta” Cluj-Napoca in Romania. Since I started working in the field of radiation therapy 11 years ago, my main focus has been brachytherapy and its application in the treatment of gynaecological cancers.

I have been involved in the transition from 2D to 3D brachytherapy and, in the last year, in the implementation of MRI-based image-guided brachytherapy. I always try to remain up-to-date with everything brachytherapy, such as new technologies and techniques.

I try to attend all the European Society for Radiotherapy and Oncology (ESTRO) courses and workshops that are focused on brachytherapy, for two main reasons: firstly because at them, I meet other specialists involved in the field of brachytherapy, and secondly, because I always learn something new.

The new structure of the workshop enabled me to focus on my main treatment site, and participation in the meeting gave me some insights into what is coming up next and what future studies will be focused on.

Of course two of the important aspects of the meeting, besides all the interesting data that were presented, were the discussions with other participants and the feedback from faculty members. Since there are only a few of us in the field of brachytherapy, communication and experience-sharing are important and fruitful.

Generally, ESTRO events exceed my expectations, not only because they are well organised and the scientific programmes are always very interesting, but mostly because all the participants are open to discussion, and they share and give insights into how I can improve my daily clinical work.

One of the most interesting pieces of information that I learned and took back home as a message was the quality indicators that can be implemented in gynaecological brachytherapy. Quality assurance in brachytherapy has gained importance over the last few years, and having indicators defined and standardised can only lead to more homogeneous brachytherapy treatment across all centres.

In my daily clinical practice, and in Romania in recent years, quality assurance has become more important and the implementation of quality indicators has been a hot topic. I was very pleased to learn about this at the workshop and I have already proposed the implementation of these indicators in our hospital.

Another interesting subject of discussion was the multidisciplinary approach to endometrial cancer treatment, which covered the impact of the molecular risk profile on the role of adjuvant brachytherapy. The molecular profile provides a prognostic model and is shown increasingly to predict response to treatment. Therefore, trial results will have a profound impact on treatment guidelines in the future.

Vaginal cancer, although considered a rare cancer, was presented as another indication for which MRI-based brachytherapy is considered to be the state-of-the-art treatment in standard practice.

I encourage not only my fellow physicists but also the young physicians I work with to participate in ESTRO events. I am especially keen that all who show interest in brachytherapy should participate in at least one workshop to see how brachytherapy can be used to treat more sites and that it has more to offer than we can see and do in our hospital.



Diana-Cristina Pop (Patcas)
Radiotherapy Department
Institute of Oncology "Prof. Dr. Ion Chiricuta"
Cluj-Napoca, Romania
pop.diana@iocn.ro

