



CONFERENCES

Elekta Brachytherapy Award



Ignacio Visus

Hospital Complex of Navarre
Radiation Oncology Department
Pamplona,
Spain

What does this award mean to you?

This award means international recognition of the work that our brachytherapy unit has been doing for more than 15 years. We have made a tremendous effort day-by-day to offer the best quality treatments within a public system. We have extended the range of situations that can be addressed with the use of brachytherapy and we have integrated this radiation technique into more and more localisations, and now all this work has been rewarded.

What is your next challenge?

My next challenge will be the completion of my PhD, which is based on the analysis that we performed about the impact of high-dose-rate brachytherapy in prostate-cancer patients who are at high- and very high-risk. Another challenge will be to write the paper to publish our work and the analysis of more data about the effect of dosimetry in local control and toxicity as well as pattern relapse.

What do you think are the next challenges for radiation oncology professionals?

In my opinion, the main challenge that radiation oncology will face in the future is the need to integrate clinical research at the same level as clinical attendance. Treating patients is as important as extracting data that could enable the analysis and evaluation of the results of each institution and the improvement or development of new treatments, fractionations or radiotherapy techniques. Although most oncologists agree that this is required, we need support and investment from institutions to give us time and staff to achieve this goal. There has been a lot of effort and improvements in recent years, but in order to create strong scientific evidence to offer the best radiation treatments to our patients, we need more means.

What started your interest in science?

My parents were both scientists, and they educated my sister and me in a way that encouraged curiosity and critical thinking. I do not remember a holiday during which my mother was not telling us the names of the different types of trees or why the rocks and mountains had developed the form that they had through millions of years. I also remember that my father bought me a tiny book on human anatomy when I was only six or seven. My sister, who always paved the way for me, became a doctor before I was, so she also played a key role. It would be really hard not to become a scientist with this family!

What do you do in your spare time?

Travel is my favourite thing to do, so any time when I can take a few days off, I go with my girlfriend to visit another city or country. She is an expert at organising the best holidays, and we do not miss any opportunity that the calendar brings us. I also love to spend time with my friends, running half marathons and watching videos of space rockets.

