



CONFERENCES

Emmanuel van der Schueren Award



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

The next decade will see a revolution in the way we work as technology advances to replace many of the tasks we currently regard as core business. Image reporting, target- and organ-at-risk definition, and treatment planning will be computer-driven and the clinical team will merely oversee these computer-performed tasks. This will free us to focus on our patients better, but many will see these changes as a threat to their expertise.

What is your next challenge?

My next challenge is my next patient. Each interaction offers the opportunity to share with and learn from each other.

If you hadn't been a scientist, what would you like to have been?

I am not entirely sure I am a scientist (as my lecture addresses). If I had not entered medical school, I would have liked to have been an engineer - although my grasp of mathematics may have made that hazardous!

What has been your involvement within the European Society for Radiotherapy and Oncology (ESTRO)?

I have been fortunate to have had a career-long involvement with ESTRO from the time when, as a trainee, I attended my first ESTRO meeting with John Yarnold. That was with the third meeting of the European Cancer Organisation (ECCO3) in Stockholm. Since then, my ESTRO activities have been focused on membership of the Groupe Européen de Curiethérapie (GEC)-ESTRO - I had the privilege of joining and subsequently chairing the GEC-ESTRO committee - and I led the prostate and urology brachytherapy group. It is through brachytherapy that I first became involved in the ESTRO School; I was invited by Erik van Limbergen to join the faculty of the course in modern brachytherapy, and subsequently, through George Kovacs, to be course director of the prostate brachytherapy course. One of my other great interests in oncology has been palliation, and it was a great occasion when, as co-director with Yvette van der Linden, we established the first ESTRO palliative care and radiotherapy course in 2016. This course has gone on to be a regular event in the school calendar and highly popular with delegates. Currently, I am a clinical editor for the

Green Journal and a member of the clinical committee and the advisory committee for radiation oncology practice. I completed two terms on both the education committee and ESTRO Council in 2018.

During all these activities, it has been a great privilege to share time with ESTRO members of all disciplines from across Europe and beyond, all of whom have a common goal to represent and promote radiotherapy in all its forms and to optimise care for our patients.

When do you think you will retire, and what would you like to do then?

I had to look up the meaning of the word 'retire' as it is not in my vocabulary. The two definitions I am most comfortable with are 'to withdraw, or go away or apart, to a place of privacy, shelter, or seclusion' and 'to go to bed'. My colleagues will attest to my skill at the former, usually when they are seeking me out!

