



# CONFERENCES

## Jens Overgaard Legacy award



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### *To whom would you like to dedicate your award?*

I am grateful to receive it, but this award reflects comprehensive, long-standing, international cooperation between many people who have been, are and will be committed to this field and whose commitment enables its further evolution. Therefore I dedicate this award to the three international groups that have made possible the evolution in the progress of image-guided adaptive radiotherapy in cervical cancer:

- the gyn working group/network of the Groupe Européen de Curiethérapie (GEC) and the European Society for Radiotherapy & Oncology (ESTRO);
- the study and research group of the international study on MRI-based brachytherapy in locally advanced cervical cancer (EMBRACE);
- the committee that produced the 89 report of the International Commission on Radiation Units and Measurements (ICRU).

These groups, together with multidisciplinary local gynaecological oncology groups (which comprised MDs, medical physicists, radiotherapists), made it possible to translate technical and conceptual innovations into physics and clinical evidence. All these groups were cornerstones in innovation and clinical implementation, in clinical studies, research, education and dissemination, which resulted in changes of practice that led to better patient care.

Therefore, this award is in fact a joint award that reflects a huge, complex, communicative, cooperative, multicentre, international activity over a period of more than two decades. ESTRO has been very supportive in this continuous process.

### *What do you think are the next challenges for radiation oncologists (or radiation physicists, radiobiologists, radiotherapists, brachytherapists)?*

For the future, it seems to be most important for radiation oncology that the different professions find ways to combine their efforts in technical, conceptual and clinical research and development beyond their disciplines and their centres in order to arrive at overall clinically relevant progress from which patients can truly benefit. The joint activities that have been developed in the field of gynaecological radiotherapy may serve as a model from which several issues can be translated into other fields of radiation oncology. In those fields, technical and conceptual innovations must be investigated according to their impact on clinical outcomes, which is both true for disease and morbidity/quality-of-life outcomes.

## ***What have been the highlights of your career?***

The evolution of image-guided radiotherapy in gynaecology over the last decades has certainly become the major highlight of my professional career. This has involved much pioneer work in the multidisciplinary group in Vienna, continuous international cooperation and communication and R&D with other major groups from different centres that were mainly within the GEC-ESTRO gyn working group and network (Paris, Leuven, Aarhus, Utrecht, Cambridge, Mumbai, recently Rotterdam and many more); and finally the EMBRACE study and research group.

Examples of other major highlights have been: my involvement with heavy particle therapy (MedAUSTRON and international); education and training in Vienna, in international teaching courses and workshops, in the ESTRO school; brachytherapy in general (e.g. within GEC-ESTRO) and in clinical practice; clinical patient care in Vienna; and multidisciplinary tumour boards in Vienna.

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

I have retired already, in 2016, and I have continued so far with scientific and educational activities as professor emeritus. I am now gradually stepping back from these professional fields, and I have become much more active in new, challenging fields, in particular in areas related to culture (music playing and listening; literature; fine arts). Now I can spend much more time with my wife and my large family, in which I have many children and grandchildren, and with friends.

