



RESEARCH PROJECTS

Report from the Fourth Annual Meeting of the ESTRO European Particle Therapy Network Task Force

9 April 2019, Brussels, Belgium

The fifth annual meeting of the European Particle Therapy Network (EPTN), a task force of the European Society for Radiotherapy and Oncology (ESTRO), took place at the ESTRO office in Brussels, Belgium. It enjoyed wide representation, as there were 44 participants from 33 institutions in 13 European countries. Dietmar Georg was introduced as an additional co-chair of the network. Dr Georg is head of the Division of Medical Radiation Physics in the Department of Radiation Oncology at the Medical University of Vienna.

Three more new particle therapy facilities have begun operating since the last meeting of the EPTN in London on 28 June. One is in Denmark, another in The Netherlands and the third in the UK.

The network was informed of the meeting of the European Commission's subgroup of the Steering Group on Proton Therapy, held in October last year to define the future of proton therapy and its access for European cancer patients. Formation of this subgroup/task force was initiated by the EU Commission-DG Santé and the European Investment Bank (EIB), which receives many requests for financial support from EU members to set up proton therapy centres. The subgroup will draw up a draft of a white paper on proton therapy, which should be available by the end of 2019, and will be disbanded once it has completed its allocated tasks.

The EPTN took part in the scientific programme of ESTRO 38, in Milan, Italy, 26-30 April 2019. It was also invited to present at the Particle Therapy Co-operative Group (PTCOG) meeting in Manchester in June 2019.



EPTN meeting in progress at the ESTRO office in Brussels

Report on the activities of Working Parties

[WP1: Clinical](#)

[WP2: Dose assessment, quality assurance, dummy runs, technology inventory](#)

[WP3: Education and training](#)

[WP4: Image Guidance in Particle Therapy](#)

[WP5: Treatment planning systems in particle therapy](#)

[WP6: Radiobiology](#)

[WP7: Health economics](#)

Collaborative efforts

PTCOG

ESTRO and EPTN have held a memorandum of understanding with the Particle Therapy Co-Operative Group (PTCOG) since 2018, to collaborate on education, meetings and scientific exchange. During this meeting, it was felt that a closer collaboration with PTCOG was not necessary at this time. EPTN this year was represented at the PTCOG 58 meeting, which was held between 10 June and 15 June in Manchester, UK.

INSPIRE

NfraStructure in Proton International Research (INSPIRE) is funded by the European Commission. It was launched in 2017 and is made up of three components: networking, transnational access and joint research activities. These activities complement those of EPTN, which enables collaboration. WPs are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities and collaborate with INSPIRE.

FUTURE OF EPTN

EPTN was created in 2014. The network has expanded steadily and collaborates with other partners. It is well established in ESTRO as a task force and its particle therapy activities are integrated into ESTRO and EORTC. At this meeting, there was a discussion about whether there was a need to change EPTN's structure in ESTRO and perhaps become a committee. It was decided that EPTN should remain an ESTRO task force for as long as possible, since particle therapy is one of the many treatment options in radiotherapy and its proponents should aim to be completely integrated in the radiotherapy community. The

way forward would be to extend EPTN's activities in the areas of clinical trials and education. It was thought that the network should work towards finding ways to standardise methodology and technology in particle therapy in order to be able to show the technology's benefits. This would also ease collaboration and networking.

Ways to boost EPTN's profile in ESTRO and externally should be explored, e.g. through the use of more communications channels of ESTRO and its European Cancer Foundation (ECF), to reach a wider audience of

stakeholders than there is currently. Another possibility would be to create a communication working party to take care of such activities.

The next meeting of the EPTN will be on 25 March 2020 at the ESTRO office in Brussels.

On behalf of EPTN
EPTN organisers



Damien C. Weber
Villigen, Switzerland



Cai Grau
Aarhus, Denmark



Dietmar Georg
Vienna, Austria

EPTN WP Coordinators

WP	Title	Coordinators
1	Clinical	Hans Langendijk (<i>Groningen, NL</i>)-Leader Roberto Orecchia (<i>Milano, IT</i>) Karin Hausterman (<i>Leuven, BE</i>) Daniel Zips (<i>Tuebingen, DE</i>) Jacques Balosso (<i>Grenoble, FR</i>) Esther Troost (<i>Dresden, DE</i>)
2	Dose assessment, quality assurance, dummy runs, technology inventory	Oliver Jäckel (<i>Heidelberg, DE</i>) Sairos Safai (<i>Villigen, CH</i>) Stefan Menkel (<i>Dresden, DE</i>)
3	Education	Morten Høyer (<i>Aarhus, DK</i>) Marco Schwarz (<i>Trento, IT</i>)
4	Image guidance in particle therapy	Aswin Hoffmann (<i>Dresden, DE</i>) Alessandra Bolsi (<i>Villigen, CH</i>)
5	TPS in particle therapy	Håkan Nyström (<i>Uppsala, SE</i>) Tony Lomax (<i>Villigen, CH</i>)
6	Radiobiology, RBE	Manjit Dosanjh (<i>Geneva, CH</i>) Bleddyn Jones (<i>Oxford, UK</i>) Jörg Pawelke (<i>Dresden, DE</i>) Martin Prutschy (<i>Zurich, CH</i>) Brita S. Sørensen (<i>Aarhus, DK</i>)
7	Health Economics	Yolande Lievens (<i>Ghent, BE</i>) Klaus Nagels (<i>Bayreuth, DE</i>) Ulrike L. Kliebsch (<i>Villigen, CH</i>)