



SCHOOL

Course Report

Implementation and Practice of Image-Guided Stereotactic Body Radiotherapy

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Course directors:

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A report from a radiation therapist's (RTT) perspective

Could you please briefly introduce yourself?

My name is Ânia Coelho. I am a radiation therapist and I live and work in Portugal. I started working about 18 months ago, so I am building my experience. To improve it, I have been studying technological advances and innovations in radiotherapy.

Why did you choose to attend this course?

For me, stereotactic body radiotherapy (SBRT) is the future, even though it is already the present in many institutions. I wanted to deepen my knowledge of this technique, as the knowledge I had before I attended the course was very basic, and I realised that the programme of the European Society for Radiotherapy and Oncology (ESTRO) course was super complete and involved prestigious people from the world of radiotherapy, from whom I would love to hear and learn. Also, since I intended to implement SBRT in my service, I couldn't miss the opportunity to take this course.

What aspects of the course were the most interesting and why?

It is gratifying to be able to share a room with international professionals who have vast knowledge that they are ready to make available. It was interesting to know the fundamentals of the various speakers and the current practices in the various institutions. The interaction among the participants was huge! I think this interaction was one of the main points in the course's development, as it generated a series of key questions that aided the understanding of the topics covered and, consequently, should lead to the improvement of the SBRT technique. It's important to mention that all questions were answered! I enjoyed especially the parallel sessions because they enabled us to address specific issues in our areas and, in a way, to make us "feel at home".

Did the course activities improve your knowledge and skills in the relevant subject?

Absolutely. We were exposed to several clinical cases, the presentations of which demanded medical, physical and dosimetric knowledge. As each case was different, we learned to adapt the SBRT technique to each patient, according to their specifications and to the pathology.

Did the course meet your expectations? If so, how?

There is no doubt about that! Even though it was online, I felt there was a good connection between the faculty and the attendees. It was a long and intense course, but very rewarding. The schedules were always respected, the recorded lectures involved very clear language (and there was time to process them before classes) and everyone was heard!

List three important 'takeaways' from the course.

The unity of the multidisciplinary team is essential in the implementation of the SBRT technique, as it is a precise and exact method that requires as much focus as possible.

It's necessary to implement protocols that must be updated according to technological evolution. Clinical and dosimetric specifications must be carefully respected so that they guide good practice.

Each patient is unique and must be considered as such. We must select the pathology responsibly according to the patient's eligibility to be treated, and we must adapt the means of treatment to the patient's limitations.

How will what you have learnt be implemented in your daily job/ clinical practice?

Soon, treatment protocols for the SBRT technique will be implemented in our practice and I have been nominated to participate in their elaboration, given the knowledge I acquired in this ESTRO course.

How would you encourage someone who has never been to an ESTRO course to join this course next year/ in two years?

I have already recommended it to my colleagues but I will definitely remind them to join this course in the future!



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