



SCHOOL

Advanced Skills in Modern Radiotherapy

19-23 June 2023, Paris, France

Course director:

Elizabeth Forde, assistant professor, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland

Could you please briefly introduce yourself?

My name is Sita and I am currently a radiation therapist (RTT) at Kantonsspital Winterthur (KSW) in Switzerland.

I am originally from Dublin, where I studied for my BSc in radiation therapy at Trinity College, Dublin.

Why did you choose to attend this course?

In my current role, I work partly on treatment machines (a linear accelerator and brachytherapy, orthovoltage and CT scanners) and partly in treatment planning and contouring.

It was clear that this course addressed the complete treatment care path, so I was certain that I would learn some valuable lessons from the expert faculty involved. Additionally, this course was aimed at RTTs and their roles in modern treatment and care, which is a topic I am quite passionate about, because the role of the RTT is ever-evolving and adapting to the rapid changes in technology.

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

I found the most interesting aspect to be the refreshing insights into the common challenges that we currently face as RTTs on a European scale. The course contained much depth and detail while the faculty managed simultaneously to balance the “big-picture” concepts elegantly. Through this mix, they created a refreshing perspective on the challenges that are associated with the evolving role and responsibilities of the RTT.

It was equally fascinating to meet fellow RTTs from across Europe with whom I could share my experiences and opinions. These discussions were made possible due to the design of the course.

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

Absolutely! The faculty delivered high-quality presentations in a clear and concise manner, which nurtured an excellent learning environment that was reinforced through practical workshops.

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

The course went beyond expectations. I had previously heard from colleagues that it was a very informative course, which proved to be true; the wide scope and depth of the material was excellent. The faculty managed to cover all site-specific treatments in terms of treatment planning, delineation, immobilisation, image-guided radiation therapy, image registration and treatment modalities. In addition, current topics of interest were covered, such as adaptive radiotherapy, error management, incident reporting and the use of artificial intelligence in radiotherapy.

List three important 'takeaways' from the course.

1. A holistic approach to and overview of treatment planning is more efficient and beneficial to the patient than is a sole focus on quantitative evaluation methods, i.e. dosimetric constraints.
2. Regarding errors and incidents, it is important to nurture a healthy culture surrounding incident-reporting and evaluation to prevent future problems and educate professionals.
3. Standardised education is essential for RTTs to adapt to the future of radiotherapy - knowing why we do things, not just how to do them.

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

If you are an RTT or radiation oncology professional who is interested in gaining a clear and concise overview of the full treatment and care path from experts in the field of radiation oncology in an engaging and refreshing manner, then this is certainly an ESTRO course you will benefit from. The teachers are all very passionate in their own fields of expertise, and this passion encourages the development of an engaging learning environment in which you will connect with fellow radiation oncology professionals from around Europe and gain first-hand insight into the similarities and differences across European radiotherapy practice.



Sita Cogan
Radiation therapist
Kantonsspital Winterthur
Winterthur, Switzerland
scogan@tcd.ie

