

## CTRad bulletin

### Radiotherapy physics grants workshop, July 2014

- Phil Evans and Ran Mackay (both WS4) organised a radiotherapy physics grants educational workshop to assist individuals looking to gain competitive research funding in RT physics research, especially those applying for the first time or in the early stages of their career. This is part of a long-term effort to improve funding for academic clinical physics in the UK.
- Funder presenters included Cancer Research UK, Medical Research Council, Modernising Scientific Careers scheme, National Institute for Health Research, Science and Technology Facilities Council and the Wellcome Trust.
- The day showcased those who have been successful in obtaining RT physics research funding from different funders; they shared their experience in putting together the applications, including examples of strong collaborations between clinical and academic scientists; research funders presented details of current opportunities, as well as hints and tips on applying successfully. There was a lively Q&A session in the afternoon where funders answered questions and queries from the delegates, and a discussion on the role of RT physics research in a developing NHS.
- The workshop was well attended by around 80 delegates, mostly medical physicists, together with three clinical oncologists and two consumer members. Feedback suggests that attendees found all the talks very inspiring and the funders are all keen to engage.

### Route to registration in radiotherapy workshop, September 2014

- Despite increasing numbers of radiotherapy trials and rising recruitment, a continuing challenge has been increasing the number of trials evaluating radiotherapy and novel agent combinations. Industry representatives on WS 2, Ozlem Ataman and Stephen Kelly, together with the co-chairs Ruth Plummer and Ricky Sharma, organised a workshop aimed at identifying impediments and solutions to radiotherapy/novel agent combination studies and addressing the question of whether RT-drug combinations represent a realistic registration strategy. Invitations were sent to major pharmaceutical companies; enthusiastic responses from many companies resulted in half of the attendees being industry delegates.
- After the introductory talks, Mark Saunders presented the preliminary results and achievements of the 'DREAM' radiation-drug trial which is a prime example of a successful collaboration between industry and an academic centre. The delegates then split into two discussion groups to better understand what the perceived blocks to developing such trials might be, identify possible solutions, and explore what the UK research community can do to improve the overall situation.
- To gain more insights into the barriers in different settings, delegates were asked to fill in a survey which was collected at the end of the workshop. The main aim of the academic survey



is to find out how many research groups have attempted to develop combination studies and document their experiences; industry delegates were asked why, in their view, there are not more RT combination studies; and consumers were asked to consider how consumer groups might help to increase approval of these combination studies.

- The delegates had plenty of time to network and a lot of positive responses have already been received.
- A report of the survey findings and a summary of the meeting will be published in the near future.

### **Preclinical quality assurance workshop, September 2014**

- Chris Moore (WS1) organised a workshop on 'Pathway to systematised quality assurance (QA) in preclinical X-irradiation', attended by both physicists and radiobiologists. The workshop successfully started a substantial discussion to define the level of physics support needed for conventional and complex preclinical irradiation equipment across the UK, with agreement that a common preclinical QA framework is indeed needed.
- Delegates shared their experiences and organisational practices in the clinical domain; there was also a manufacturer's perspective on how the manufacturing community might work in a complementary way regarding QA provision given some of the concerns highlighted.
- Key deliverables from this workshop include identifying what dedicated QA resources are available to centres, producing much needed 'plain English' guidelines for published physics QA standards, along with national leadership in the various platforms.

### **Involving consumers in your research**

- The NCRI Consumer Liaison Group is again organising a 'Dragon's Den' session at the 10<sup>th</sup> NCRI Cancer Conference in Liverpool this year, where a small panel of patients and carers experienced in cancer research will offer feedback for proposed research projects. This open meeting takes place during the lunchtime of **Monday 3 November** in the Conference venue; if you are interested in participating, please contact [engagement@cancer.org.uk](mailto:engagement@cancer.org.uk).

### **The 10<sup>th</sup> NCRI Cancer Conference, Liverpool, 2–5 November 2014**

- The Royal College of Radiologists and the NCRI Cancer Conference are collaborating for a third year running, bringing a special day of radiotherapy-themed sessions on **Tuesday 4 November**. See the Conference website for more details <http://conference.ncri.org.uk>.
- CTRad's proposals guidance meeting will be held on **Wednesday 5 November** following the close of the NCRI Conference.

### **CPD points**

Most of our workshops and meetings are now CPD-accredited – don't forget to collect your certificate after each meeting.

### **Contact us**

If you have any feedback, news you want to share, or want to find out more about topics mentioned above, please contact the CTRad Secretariat ([CTRad@ncri.org.uk](mailto:CTRad@ncri.org.uk)). You can also browse the CTRad web pages [ctrad.ncri.org.uk](http://ctrad.ncri.org.uk) for more information and future dates of CTRad events.

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