

CTRad bulletin

CTRad All-Workstreams meeting, 10 Nov 2010

- CTRad's members have been meeting at least once a year to give investigators an opportunity to present radiotherapy-related proposals for input and advice. The aim is to improve the chances of success at obtaining funding by sharing skills and expertise.
- A successful All-Workstreams proposal review meeting was held after the NCRI Cancer Conference, with 18 research ideas presented. Workstreams (WS) will be assigned proposals to oversee, offering continuing support and tracking progress at each Workstream meeting. More review meetings will be arranged in due course.

22nd International LH Gray Conference: Realising the potential of drug-radiation interactions for cancer treatment, 2–4 Feb 2011, Manchester

- Congratulations to Ian Stratford (WS1) for organising an outstanding conference, and thanks to him for including a collaborative CTRad/ECMC day in the programme. The aim of the conference was to highlight the biological consequences of combining radiation with molecularly targeted drugs, and the potential for improving patients' response to cancer treatment. The conference was attended by CTRad and ECMC members, local and international experts, industry representatives and others. The Friday programme was co-funded by and delivered in collaboration with the LH Gray Trust and the ECMC Network.
- A number of local and overseas speakers remarked how much they enjoyed the conference, thanks to the session chairs and participants. Ian will write a conference report for submission to a journal in due course.



National Collaboration Workshops

- In 2010, CTRad invited the Gray Institute and the Leeds Institute of Molecular Medicine to host five workshops, to bring together clinicians and scientists working in radiation biology and oncology, in order to discuss pre-clinical research data and innovative trial ideas. The aim was to foster collaboration between researchers in order to initiate translational research.
- The topics covered were:
 - *Tumour Microenvironment* 4 Oct 2010
 - *DNA Damage and Repair* 29 Oct 2010
 - *Signal Transduction* 2 Dec 2010
 - *Molecular Radiotherapy* 13 Dec 2010
 - *Biotherapy and Radiotherapy* 17 Dec 2010

- We would like to hear any feedback on the workshops, and whether you feel any of the topics should be repeated in future years.

National Radiotherapy Awareness Initiative (NRAI)

- In response to the CR-UK Radiotherapy review and in agreement with the National Cancer Action Team about raising radiotherapy awareness, the National Radiotherapy Awareness Initiative (NRAI) has been established to develop and lead a strategy for raising public awareness of radiotherapy across the UK. Tim Maughan has been appointed Chair of this initiative.
- NRAI launched the 'Year of Radiotherapy' on 27 Jan 2011, with a media event at the Science Media Centre resulting in over 200 reports in news outlets across the UK.
- Tim Maughan is keen for CTRad members to provide any ideas for radiotherapy features during 2011, and in particular any patient stories that illustrate the importance of RT as a treatment modality. Please send any ideas to Tim or Carolyn Chan, to feed into the NRAI steering group.

Academic radiation oncology think tank 2011

- A second academic think tank meeting was held on 7 March at the RCR, for centres to update on progress made since last March and discuss ongoing challenges. There was time for centre representatives to network and exchange ideas, with lively discussion throughout the meeting.
- Four invited centres (Leeds, Glasgow, UCL and Belfast) shared the progress made in the past year, including successes and how they overcame some of their local challenges.
- Julie Hearn from CR-UK gave some background to the recent CR-UK call for programme grant funding application, and attendees discussed how best to support the two radiotherapy-related applications that have been invited to submit full proposals.
- Ricky Sharma presented on a RCR Professional Support and Standards Board mentorship proposal and invited delegates to comment and feed back.
- Tim Illidge and Tim Maughan gave updates on funding mechanisms for clinical oncologist research time in both England and Wales respectively. The Welsh NISCHR scheme appears to be working better than the English Flexibility and Sustainability Funding scheme; CTRad is continuing discussions with NIHR to ensure a workable scheme.

Forthcoming activities

- Martin Robinson (WS4) is organising a meeting on 20 May to bring together manufacturers involved with radiotherapy equipment, dosimetry and planning systems, to engage them more with CTRad.
- At the 2010 Academic Think Tank meeting, physics research time was ranked second in a survey to identify deficits in personnel, funding or culture of radiotherapy-related research in the UK. A physics think tank is being put together for May / June this year, to bring the radiotherapy physics research community together, led by Ran MacKay (WS4).
- Don Jones (WS1) is leading on a Biomarkers Workshop, being planned for Spring 2012. The aim is to promote the inclusion of quality biomarker translational research in radiotherapy trials, and to provide a forum to exchange ideas.

Contact us

If you have any feedback or comments, or want to find out more about topics mentioned above, please contact either your Workstream Co-Chair or Carolyn Chan (carolyn.chan@ncri.org.uk)

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