

CTRad bulletin

CTRad's new membership structure – April 2018

- The overall success of CTRad is a tribute to its members and the UK radiotherapy research community. The current diverse CTRad membership reflects the multidisciplinary nature of radiotherapy research and the need for specialist expertise. However, CTRad understands that it still has limited reach and influence outside the major radiotherapy centres, and it is increasingly apparent that improvements could be made to its current membership structure.
- The CTRad Executive Group therefore proposed a modified membership structure which will increase efficiency and productivity and maximise the ability of each Workstream to achieve its aims and objectives. There will be fewer members on each of the Workstreams, and these positions will be determined by a competitive application process. In parallel, CTRad membership will be opened up to the wider radiotherapy community to encompass clinicians and allied health professionals from all UK radiotherapy centres, as well as researchers from the broader scientific community, trainees, junior researchers and consumers. Members will have opportunities to participate in and benefit from more focused, project-driven working groups that are a key component of CTRad's activities.
- We are confident that the new membership structure will be more efficient and more inclusive and will make it easier for CTRad members to make a meaningful contribution. The Executive Group will continue to be responsible for delivering CTRad's broader strategy, and will coordinate and integrate the activities of the four Workstreams and the project-specific working groups.
- The new membership structure will come into force in April 2018, and the application process will commence in the New Year. Details will be available on the CTRad website very soon.

'ARTNET IMRT vs IMPT in Head and Neck cancer' workshop, Dec 2017

- Together with Workstream 7 of the CRUK Advanced Radiotherapy Technologies Network (ARTNET), CTRad organised a workshop to provide a forum for discussion of trial methodologies, ethics, patient pathways, feasibility and logistics of randomising patients with oropharyngeal cancer to intensity-modulated radiotherapy (IMRT) or intensity-modulated proton therapy (IMPT). The workshop focused on a proposed trial, TORPEdO, which aims to evaluate whether proton beam therapy (PBT) can reduce patient reported physical toxicities. This is likely to be the first UK PBT trial.
- In total, 26 experts attended the meeting in London, representing diverse disciplines including clinical oncology, radiography, medical physics, statistics, patient involvement, and health economics. Attendees represented both proton and photon centres such that balanced perspectives informed the discussions.
- David Sebag-Montefiore (CTRad Deputy Chair) chaired the meeting. The first session comprised discussions on proposed trial design, endpoints, assessments, patient recruitment, pathway and logistics, patient involvement, feedback from focus groups, and grant application timelines. After a networking lunch, discussions in the second session focused on the treatment planning (clinical and physics aspects), cost effectiveness and translational aspects and opportunities. Key points included optimising primary endpoints, trial assessments timelines, grant application strategy, minimisation of bias, and equipoise between proton and photon centres in reference to clinical and physics aspects of the trial.
- There was very strong support for the proposed trial and all delegates expressed enthusiasm to contribute to its development. The next step will be to integrate the key points from these discussions into the grant application to be submitted in 2018. A follow-up teleconference will be scheduled to facilitate continued involvement of delegates in study development.

Spotlight on CTRad at the NCRI Conference, Nov 2017

- The spotlight was on CTRad on day three of the NCRI Conference. Anthony Chalmers (Chair) gave a short lunchtime presentation to showcase CTRad's work, and to illustrate how Conference delegates and researchers could engage with CTRad, highlighting in particular the Radiotherapy-Drug Combinations Consortium (RaDCom). CTRad is looking forward to maintaining its momentum, continuing to oversee and drive evolution and enlargement of the UK radiotherapy research landscape. To achieve these goals we will work collaboratively with stakeholders across and beyond the entire cancer research community.



CTRad Proposals Guidance Meeting, Nov 2017

- CTRad held its 15th Proposals Guidance Meeting in Liverpool, following the close of the NCRI Conference. Duncan Gilbert shared lessons learned during the process of obtaining funding from CRUK's Clinical Research Committee for a translational research programme associated with the PLATO (PersonaLising RadioTherapy dOse for Anal Cancer) trial. He outlined an iterative process that involved compiling a 'shopping list' of potential opportunities, getting experts together to developing the ideas, and sequential refinement of the application, which lasted 18 months. George Higginbotham, a medical student from Leeds, then presented preliminary results of a survey of UK tissue banks survey that was undertaken over the summer. He reported that pre- and post-RT samples from some studies are already available for sharing, and that many current studies have obtained permission for sample collection and sharing. Further work includes a gap analysis and an intent to standardise consent forms.
- This meeting also saw 7 proposals presented and discussed by CTRad members, providing investigators with a unique opportunity to obtain expert feedback on their trial proposal ideas.
- The next CTRad proposals guidance meeting will be held in Q2 2018; more details and a call for proposals will be circulated in February 2018.

Forthcoming activities

- **'MRC radiotherapy & radiobiology funding' educational workshop, 21 February 2018:** This workshop aims to provide a forum for radiotherapy researchers seeking to understand the MRC's various funding streams, and to find out what the MRC is looking for in its 'Radiation Oncology and Biology Highlight' notice. The ultimate aim is to improve the chances of radiotherapy researchers successfully applying for funding from the MRC. The afternoon session will provide an opportunity for delegates to present and obtain feedback on specific radiotherapy-related projects, both clinical and pre-clinical. You can find out more on the CTRad website: <http://ctrad.ncri.org.uk/events/ctrad-mrc-funding-workshop>

Thank you to our Funders

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Contact us

If you have any feedback or news you want to share, or would like to find out more about the topics mentioned above, please contact the CTRad Team (CTRad@ncri.org.uk). You can also browse the CTRad web pages ctrad.ncri.org.uk for more information about upcoming CTRad events, or tweet about your research using hashtag #NCRI_CTRad and/or the NCRI handle @NCRI_partners .

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