

## CTRad bulletin

### CTRad Proposals and annual meeting, Nov 2018

- CTRad held its biannual [Proposals Guidance meeting](#) in Birmingham in November 2018, and for the first time the meeting was held as a standalone day to provide a more varied programme.
- After an introduction given by Anthony Chalmers (Chair), Alex Pemberton, Head of CRUK's Therapeutic Discovery Funding, gave an overview of the new CRUK Radiation Research Network (RadNet) Centres of Excellence funding scheme. This exciting initiative will provide infrastructure funding for a network of UK centres, thus coordinating and enhancing RT research activities between centres, facilitating partnerships and acting as a showcase for UK RT research. The RadNet initiative is part of CRUK's response to an independent strategic review it commissioned to determine how best to support radiation research over the next 5-10 years. More information about this review can be found [on the CRUK website](#).
- After hearing about the RadNet funding opportunity, attendees learnt about recent and ongoing CTRad collaborations in presentations delivered by chief investigators from the CONCORDE (Alastair Greystoke) and PLATO (David Sebag-Montefiore) studies. Alastair and David described their journeys from pre-trial work, design of the trials, putting together the multidisciplinary teams to submission, showing the complex steps involved. Both speakers attributed the progress made in these projects to team work.
- Another session then showcased excellence in two RT clinical trials through presentations of the most recent results: STAMPEDE (Joe O'Sullivan) and HYBRID (Robert Huddart). Both speakers expressed gratitude to patients and staff at the numerous participating centres.
- Other updates included a summary of the findings of the CTRad academic physics survey, which will be published shortly (Alan Hounsell); an update on the RT trials setup times project, including key issues identified and potential solutions (Catherine Hanna); revamping the Biomarker Network Support (G Don Jones); proton beam therapy (PBT) clinical trials developments (David Sebag-Montefiore); and CM-Path and its interface with CTRad (Val Speirs and Nicola Curtin).
- In the afternoon delegates divided into four breakout groups to discuss 11 clinical trial proposals, which covered a broad range of radiotherapy topics including combinations with surgery, imaging and palliative care. Participants found the discussions of study design, relevant end points, patient representatives' input and how to make the trial attractive to funders very useful.
- The meeting provided another good networking opportunity and some attendees fed back that this was a great platform to discuss new and current RT trials. CTRad is continuously looking at ways to help radiotherapy researchers develop their trial ideas, even those at very early stages, in order to nurture development. Please look out for the next call for proposals in the near future.

### CTRad ART-NET PBT clinical trials progress update meeting, Nov 2018

- Following the May PBT workshop at Leeds, the CTRad ART-NET PBT Clinical Trials Strategy Group felt there was a need for more interaction with researchers on a regular basis, which should be separate from the biannual CTRad proposals guidance meetings. A proposals update meeting was therefore organised especially for these PBT proposals to provide a more focused development environment.

- Eight proposals updated on their progress at this November meeting. Some proposals' concepts have changed and researchers have considered different aspects. They are all at very different stages of development, requiring different levels of expertise and input in order to make some of these studies fundable and clinically deliverable.
- Another workshop is planned for the end of February in Manchester to further develop these PBT proposals, with an emphasis on accessing expertise from CTUs, methodology and patient input.

### **CTRad ART-NET MR-Linac workshop, Oct 2018**

- CTRad and ART-NET supported a workshop hosted in Oxford and organised by Tim Maughan to discuss technological capabilities and research plans in MR-Linac. This was attended by 50 people, representing NHS sites procuring MR-Linac as well as private centres.
- As part of the introduction to the day, presenters from the Institute of Cancer Research and Oxford described their technologies' capabilities and timelines. Various researchers presented current ideas and priorities for clinical research, as well as the evidence needed for health economics.
- In the afternoon, delegates separated into breakout groups to discuss specific projects in three areas: pelvis, abdomen and lung. Following the feedback there was general support to develop an umbrella multi-site platform national protocol, and perhaps a specialist group to draw together ideas on research priorities for potential publication.
- More needs to be done to bring researchers together as CTRad and ART-NET hope to develop a vibrant portfolio of MR-Linac-based research in the UK. The plan is to organise another workshop later in 2019 to develop other proposals for cross-platform study concepts that emerge. It is hoped this next workshop will also cover topics such as tariff and cost within a trial context.

### **Revamping CTRad's Biomarker Support Network for translational research**

- Embedding translational research in clinical trials may deliver improved outcomes by enabling better patient selection and/or prediction of outcome, and by enhancing the scientific basis of the trial. One of CTRad's objectives is to stimulate and promote the inclusion of high quality translational research through the wide range of expertise available in CTRad's membership.
- CTRad is looking at re-vamping our [biomarker support network](#) to enhance translational aspects of radiotherapy clinical trial proposals. If you work in the biomarker area, be it predictive or pharmacodynamic, pre-clinical or clinical, genomic, proteomic, biochemical or imaging, CTRad's Biomarker Network leads, Don Jones and Sam Terry, would like to hear from you. You can look at [this biomarker schematic](#) to identify the principal 'analysis type' and associated output that you feel you may best be able to give advice about. You can get in touch by emailing [ctrad@ncri.org.uk](mailto:ctrad@ncri.org.uk)

### **CTRad will be 10 in July this year!**

- If you have any suggestions for our [blog spots](#) or [case studies](#) please email us with your ideas, or if your study development benefited from CTRad input we would also like to hear from you.

### **Contact us**

If you have any feedback or news you want to share, or would to find out more about the topics mentioned above, please contact the CTRad Team ([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 about upcoming CTRad events, or tweet about your research using hashtag #NCRI\_CTRad and/or the NCRI handle @NCRI\_partners .

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