CTRad 10-year celebration at the 2019 NCRI Conference

- As part of CTRad’s 10-year anniversary celebrations, a session was hosted at the NCRI Conference to showcase the changing and positive radiotherapy (RT) research landscape, and how CTRad drove this process. It was hosted by Mererid Evans, Deputy Chair of CTRad.
- David Sebag-Montefiore, Chair of CTRad, presented his personal highlights from CTRad’s Top 10 achievements, giving examples of where CTRad has played a crucial role e.g. by placing patients right at the heart of the UK RT research agenda and benchmarking the UK RT research infrastructure thereby enabling significant new investment.
- Iain Foulkes, CRUK’s Executive Director of Research and Innovation, then officially launched their new investment in a RT research network called RadNet, which aims to improve cancer survival by optimising and personalising RT and has the potential to help drive a step-change in future UK radiation research. You can read NCRI’s response to the announcement here: bit.ly/NCRIResponseRadNetNov2019
- Charlotte Coles rounded off the session’s talks by giving her own insight and experience of how UK-led radiotherapy clinical trials have changed and will continue to change clinical practice worldwide, together with the potential challenges and exciting opportunities.
- Mererid Evans, in closing the session noted the importance of continued collaboration across the whole UK RT research community, facilitated and led by CTRad, alongside the progress made and new opportunities, will all underpin the next 10 years of progress in UK RT research.

PBT Clinical Trials Development Workshop, November 2019

- A PBT Clinical Trials development workshop took place on 8 November in London, organised by CTRad and UCLH.
- Yen Ching Chang and Ricky Sharma welcomed delegates to this one-day meeting. Plenary talks included technical challenges for motion management in lung and liver malignancies, the latest regarding evaluative commissioning, updates from two PBT studies developed through these workshops which are almost ready for submission and clinical service progress from the two NHS PBT centres.
- Helen Bulbeck also gave a talk regarding consumer involvement, including a reminder of the value of research to patients and the enablers of successful patient involvement.
- Delegates then went into three breakout groups to review current studies in development and discussed four new PBT studies.
- CTRad has been actively engaging with NHS England, CRUK, NIHR, NCRI and other partners and funders on developing a good number of PBT studies to utilise the available capacity. We will continue to work with the NHS PBT centres to make sure planned studies go through an iterative development process to maximise their full potential, and will present a summary of PBT clinical trials going forward at our Proposals Guidance meetings so the community will be made aware of what is in the pipeline.
- The next PBT workshop will take place on 21 May 2020 in Manchester, details will be posted on the CTRad Events website soon.

RT-DDR Inhibitor Combinations Workshop, November 2019

- This whole day meeting on 20 November 2019 was organised by Richard Adams (WS2), Nicola Curtin (WS1) and lots of input from both Workstreams’ members. It brought together around 80 people: scientists from academia and industry, statisticians, clinicians, consumer members and funding bodies with all their different experience and perspectives on issues surrounding combining DDR inhibitors (DDRi) with RT. The talks were all of high quality, and there was great interaction with the audience.
• There were talks about developing DDRi combinations and from those who have run trials, there were also talks about including biomarkers, logical problems associated with phase 1 studies, barriers getting into clinic and helpful presentations from the MRC and industry reps. There was also a short breakout session to discuss two new proposal ideas.

• Overall, the meeting showed that a multidisciplinary approach is essential to ensure the best clinical trials are developed with the highest chances of success. One of the goals would be to try and build these types of multidisciplinary studies by adding various disciplines to develop phase 1 trials. A workshop report will be available on the CTRad website shortly.

CTRad Proposals Guidance and Annual meeting, December 2019

• CTRad held another Proposals Guidance meeting on 2 December 2019 in Birmingham, where in the morning during the Proposals Guidance session, Romaana Mir (RTTQA) presented GHG consensus guidelines for organs at risk delineation for clinical trials, which attracted a lot of attention. Delegates then broke into three breakout groups to discuss a total of 9 proposals to provide investigators with expert feedback on their trial proposal ideas.

• The afternoon session aimed at bringing the national RT community up to speed with the latest funding landscape. Alex Pemberton (CRUK Head of Therapeutic Discovery Funding) gave details about the newly announced CRUK RadNet funding, including the ‘Network Fund’ and how RadNet plans on engaging with the national community. Senior representatives from the seven newly funded CRUK RadNet locations then presented plans from their units / centres.

• Mererid Evans and Tim Maughan then led a discussion session to identify areas of work for CTRad that is complementary to the CRUK RadNet investment. The atmosphere was positive and collaborative, and there was a general vibe that this should be a whole-community endeavour.

• CTRad appreciates that members of the community will need more time to digest the latest information, gather their thoughts and to reflect on informal discussions offline. CTRad is looking forward to working with RadNet to engage with the national community, to consider and promote areas of research not currently covered in RadNet’s priorities.

• The next CTRad proposals guidance meeting will be on 22 June 2020 and there is now a call for proposals, which you can find here: bit.ly/ctrad_proposals

Relevant publications in Clinical Oncology

• To illustrate the progress made by the UK RT research community, CTRad shared their 'Top 10' achievements now published in Clinical Oncology; bit.ly/CTRadClinOncTop10Editorial

• A paper about RT clinical trials setup times has just been published – this work was led by Catherine Hanna and is a collaborative effort between CTRad, NIHR and RTTQA. Read it here: bit.ly/RT_Setup_Times2020

Forthcoming activities

• CTRad/SCoR Joint Radiographer Research Workshop, 20 May 2020: Following the success of the joint radiographer research think tank meeting in 2016, CTRad and the Society and College of Radiographers (SCoR) are running another workshop to help build the UK radiotherapy research workforce. This will be of relevance in particular to UK-based therapeutic radiographers interested in developing research expertise and skills. More details about the workshop can be found here: bit.ly/CTRadSCoR_May2020

• CTRad Proposals Guidance Meeting, 22 June 2020: CTRad is again inviting investigators who have ideas or proposals for Phase I / II / III radiotherapy trials to submit their proposals for open discussion and peer input, prior to application to funding bodies. Details on how to submit your proposals can be found on CTRad’s website: bit.ly/ctrad_proposals

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 NCRI 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.