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INTRODUCTION

- 11% of Ireland's population is currently >65; this is projected to double to **1.4 million by 2040**. This represents a corresponding doubling in cancer cases.
- Data from the National Cancer Registry of Ireland has suggested undertreatment of older patients in Ireland in the past i.e. less likely to receive radical treatment approaches, compared to younger patients. The reasons for this are unclear, but not uncommon internationally.
- To help support the growth of geriatric oncology in Ireland, the National Geriatric Oncology group was founded in 2014, and held its first meeting in March 2015. It is anticipated that this will become an annual event, and marks an important milestone in the treatment of older patients in Ireland.

RESEARCH

- This year saw the publication of expert consensus panel recommendations for geriatric assessment in Oncology to facilitate the implementation of an Irish Geriatric Oncology programme.
- This involved the expertise of a national and international expert panel. A corresponding approach was also published in the US, and has recently been published in the JNCCN(Mohile et al.).

RESEARCH

- A TCD School of Medicine research study involving 200 men with advanced prostate cancer from three European cities including Dublin has been designed, with some of the men taking part in an organised six-month exercise programme.
- Both obesity and prostate cancer are becoming a lot more common and the relationship between the two in an individual patient is becoming more important.

EDUCATION

- The first national Geriatric Oncology meeting was organised by a team of specialists, led by Dr. Anne Horgan, Consultant Medical Oncologist at University Hospital Waterford (southeast Ireland) and including Ms. Anita O'Donovan (SIOG), Drs. Miriam O'Connor, Patrick Barry and George Pope. It is hoped that it will foster increased clinical and research collaboration between the various specialities and institutions involved in treating the older cancer patient in Ireland.
- The meeting organisers were delighted to receive the support of SIOG for this important event
- The meeting was aimed at geriatricians, surgical, medical/radiation oncologists and allied health professionals with an interest in this field.
- The programme was reflective of the needs of departments/organisations in transition, representing both national and international perspectives.
- This meeting is the first of what is set to be an annual event, which will support the development of this growing field in Ireland.

CANCER STRATEGY

- Irish Minister for Health, Leo Varadkar announced a National Cancer Strategy 2016-2025, with a focus on Ageing and Cancer

PUBLICATIONS

- **O'Donovan A. et al.** Expert consensus panel guidelines on geriatric assessment in oncology *European Journal of Cancer Care* 24, 574–589; 2015
- **Horgan et al.** Patterns of Care and Treatment Outcomes in Older Patients with Biliary Tract Cancer. *In press Oncotarget*

CONCLUSIONS

The first annual meeting marked an important milestone in the building of national capacity in Geriatric Oncology in Ireland. It is hoped to strengthen this network of clinicians and academics in the coming years in order to prepare for our rapidly ageing population.

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Original Article

Expert consensus panel guidelines on geriatric assessment in oncology

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O'DONOVAN A., MOHILE S.G. & LEECH M. (2015) *European Journal of Cancer Care* 24, 574–589
Expert consensus panel guidelines on geriatric assessment in oncology

RESEARCH

- Following on from a study presented in poster format at SIOG 2014 assessing the attitudes of patients towards cancer clinical trials, a national study is being developed through ICORG (the All Ireland Co-operative Oncology Research Group). This is being led by Drs. Ciara Kelly, Cathy Kelly and Anne Horgan.

