

SIOG National Representative Report – Belgium

Lore Decoster (Belgium)

Since the disappearance of funding for geriatric oncology in Belgium, we are currently in a transition phase.

Many centers are trying to incorporate geriatric oncology into the existing structures of the geriatric department.

Currently there is also not much funding for research. So we are currently focusing on analyzing the data from the studies which terminated in June 2015. One of these trials included over 8000 patients and I am working with Cindy Kenis and Hans Wildiers from Leuven in order to harmonize this large dataset (which is a very extensive work) and subsequently analyze this. We have also done an update of a cohort of colorectal cancers, looking at predictive markers for functional decline and survival. Currently we are also analyzing a dataset of lung cancer patients which was evaluated by geriatric assessment in order to look at predictive markers for functional decline and survival.

I tried to promote SIOG more this last few months both in the oncology community through the Belgian Society of Geriatric Oncology and in the geriatric society. For example we send several times mails regarding the upcoming advanced course to all members of the BSMO and an advertisement was also posted on the website of the geriatric society. In addition a report on last SIOG Annual Meeting will appear in the next edition of the Belgian Journal of Medical Oncology, which is distributed free of charge to all members of the BSMO. I will send it to you once it is published. I will also try to publish an advertisement of the next annual SIOG meeting in this journal as well as on the website of both societies.

There was also a work shop at the yearly meeting of pulmonologists on geriatric oncology. This was a really interesting event where cases of older patients with lung cancer were discussed in interactive sessions.

I also circulated the module on the treatment of colorectal cancer from SIOG among all specialists treating colorectal cancer in my hospital.

Finally I was recently contacted by a non profit organization which funds cancer projects in Belgium. Apparently they are setting up a working group for geriatric oncology. I am going to work with them and hope that this will lead in the near future to a new perspective of geriatric oncology in Belgium.