SIOG Advanced Course in Treviso: How it Influenced my Practice as a Geriatrician

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Why I took this class

I heard about the SIOG Advanced Course at the SIOG meetings in 2015 and 2016, during my residency in geriatric medicine. Since I was planning a 1-year fellowship in France in Geriatric Oncology, I thought this class would be a great addition to my year of training abroad. In fact, I intend to use this new expertise to build a collaboration between geriatricians and oncologists in my hospital when I go back to my hospital in Montreal, Canada.

My objectives

- To learn more about the treatment of malignancies in the elderly, especially regarding solid tumors
- To compare my work to what other geriatricians do worldwide
- To meet other young doctors with an interest in geriatric oncology
- To create an international network of geriatricians and oncologists for future collaborations

Timeline

**November 2016**
- End of training as a Geriatrician at University of Montreal, Quebec, Canada

**December 2016**
- Beginning of 12-month Geriatric Oncology Fellowship in Marseille, France

**June 2017**
- SIOG Advanced Course

**January 2018**
- Starting practice as a Geriatrician at Hôpital Maisonneuve-Rosemont, Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Fellowship

- Time shared between 2 care units
  - Pulmonary Oncology Department
    - Day Hospital for chemotherapy treatments (about 30 patients)
    - Outpatient clinic (evaluation of new cancer diagnostics, treatment plan, follow-up)
    - Short-stay Hospital
  - Geriatric Oncology Day Hospital
    - 5 standardized geriatric oncology evaluations per day, with the collaboration of a specialized nurse, a diettician and a pharmacist

- Multidisciplinary Tumor Boards (lung, urology, gynecology), which I attended both from a geriatrician’s and an oncologists’ perspective

- Conferences and courses
  - SIOG meeting, Milan, novembre 2016
  - Diplôme interuniversitaire d’oncogériatrie Marseille-Nice
  - Monaco Age oncology, March 9-10, 2017
  - SIOG Advanced Course, Treviso, June 28-July 1st, 2017

How this advanced course changed my practice as a geriatrician

1. It helped me to connect with other young and dynamic physicians from all over the world through our mutual interest in the care of elderly cancer patients.

2. I learned to better communicate with oncologists. Workshops simulating a multidisciplinary team discussion helped me to understand the cases from different perspectives and made the treatment plan much more adequate for the patient.

3. I was able to discuss and compare my standard geriatric evaluation with other geriatricians, which ameliorated and enriched it.

4. I learned strategies to implement a geriatric oncology clinic in a hospital where the discipline is less known.

Career plans and perspectives – What I intend to do:

Promote geriatric oncology by
- Sharing my fellowship experience with my colleagues and students
- Meeting oncology teams in my hospital and offer my help in the evaluation of elderly patients before, during and after treatment

Collaborate with oncologists by
- Creating a regular clinic for elderly cancer patients with solid tumors
- Attending tumor boards

Participate in research by
- Promoting inclusion of elderly patients in oncology protocols
- Collecting data from my geriatric evaluations
- Keeping in touch with geriatricians and oncologists I met in Treviso for future collaborations