



# SIOG Consortium

**SIOG Consortium:**  
Evidence-Based Advocacy  
for Older Adults with Cancer



[www.siog.org](http://www.siog.org)



## ABOUT SIOG

Advancing age is a high-risk factor for cancer, with individuals over 65 accounting for 60% of newly diagnosed malignancies and 70% of all cancer deaths. As oncologists around the world shift their focus to the field of geriatrics, increased understanding of the impact of research, innovation and clinical practices for older adults with cancer is becoming of critical importance.

The International Society of Geriatric Oncology, also called SIOG (French acronym for Société Internationale d'Oncologie Gériatrique), is a not-for-profit organisation founded in the year 2000 and registered under the Swiss law in October 2012. SIOG is a multidisciplinary medical society of doctors, nurses, allied health professionals and scientists with expertise in oncology, geriatrics and supportive care. SIOG counts over 1000 members in more than 84 countries around the world.



## ONCOLOGY AND SUPPORTIVE CARE: a multidisciplinary approach to advance the science of cancer treatment

The international community of health professionals, industry and public institutions need to make adequate space for cancer in training programs for physicians, nurses, and allied health professionals, especially those involved in geriatrics. More emphasis on the principles of cancer care and follow-up is required in the graduate and post-graduate continuing education of every physician and allied health professionals (nurse managers, nurse educators, direct patient care nurses).

In this perspective, the goal of SIOG's operational workplan is to foster the development of health professionals in the field of geriatric oncology, in order to optimize the treatment of older adults with cancer. SIOG promotes its efforts through 4 strategic directions, namely 1) education, 2) clinical practice, 3) research and 4) education (Ref: Lancet Oncol 2021; 22: e29-36).



### Education

- **Priority 1:** integrate geriatric oncology into training programmes for health-care professionals
- **Priority 2:** provide educational material and activities on geriatric oncology for health-care professionals
- **Priority 3:** educate the general public about the relevance of providing age-appropriate care for older adults with cancer



### Clinical practice

- **Priority 4:** implementing models to provide optimal care for older adults with cancer
- **Priority 5:** develop guidelines for the optimal treatment of older adults with cancer
- **Priority 6:** establish centres of excellence for delivering clinical care, doing clinical and translational research, and providing educational opportunities



### Research

- **Priority 7:** improve the relevance of clinical trials to older adults with cancer
- **Priority 8:** evaluate the benefits of allocated treatments and co-management in improving treatment outcomes for older adults with cancer
- **Priority 9:** use personalised medicine technologies to improve cancer understanding and management for older adults



### Collaboration & Partnerships

- **Priority 10:** strengthen links between SIOG and the geriatric oncology workforce, international specialised agencies, global and regional professional organisations, policy makers, and patient advocacy groups
- **Priority 11:** promote the inclusion of specific provisions for delivering evidence-based care for older adults in national cancer control plans
- **Priority 12:** create global funding mechanisms aimed at fostering professional development of the geriatric oncology workforce and promoting research on the interface of cancer and ageing

# SIOG CONSORTIUM

## Evidence-Based Advocacy for Older Adults with Cancer

**Chair:** Ravindran Kanesvaran  
SIOG Past President

## INTRODUCTION

According to the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), in 2022, there were approximately 20 million new cancer cases worldwide, with about 62.3% (approximately 12.5 million cases) occurring in individuals aged 60 and above. Similarly, out of the 9.7 million cancer-related deaths in 2022, 71.2% (approximately 6.9 million deaths) were among those aged 60 and above. As the general population ages – the burden of cancer will continue to rise even in the context of ongoing improvements in diagnosis and treatment. Older patients often face unique challenges in cancer diagnosis, treatment, and care that are not always adequately and holistically addressed by healthcare systems. Evidence-based advocacy for this group of patients is essential to improve care outcomes, ensure equitable access to care, and enhance the quality of life for older adults with cancer.

As the leading scientific society in the field, the International Society of Geriatric Oncology (Société Internationale d'Oncologie Geriatrique [SIOG]) is well-positioned to provide guidance on evidence-based advocacy initiatives to promote better care and treatment outcomes for this large population of patients across multiple workstreams.

This position paper aims to outline the importance of evidence-based advocacy for older adults with cancer, highlight current challenges, and propose actionable recommendations for healthcare professionals, academia, regulatory authorities, industry, funders, investors, policymakers, and patient advocacy.

## IMPORTANCE OF EVIDENCE-BASED ADVOCACY

- 1. Understanding Complex Needs:** Older adults with cancer may have multiple comorbidities, functional limitations, and psychosocial needs that complicate treatment decisions. Evidence-based advocacy can help identify these complexities through research and data analysis, enabling tailored treatment approaches that meet the specific needs of older adults.
- 2. Guiding Clinical Decision-Making:** Data-driven approaches to advocacy can improve clinical practices. Evidence from clinical trials, observational studies, and real-world data can inform healthcare providers about the effectiveness, safety and impacts on quality of life of emerging treatment options for older adults, ensuring that they receive care that aligns with their health status, care goals and preferences.
- 3. Improving Policy and Funding:** Effective advocacy can influence health policy and resource allocation to prioritize the needs of older adults with cancer. By leveraging evidence, SIOG can push for increased funding for research and clinical implementation that is focused on this large population, ensuring that their specific needs are systematically acknowledged and addressed by oncology clinical trials and healthcare systems.





## CURRENT CHALLENGES

Despite the critical importance of advocacy for older cancer patients, several challenges persist:

- 1. Underrepresentation in Clinical Trials:** Older adults are frequently underrepresented in clinical trials, leading to a lack of data on the safety and efficacy of treatments for this age group and their impact on ageing-related concerns. This gap hinders evidence-based treatment recommendations and can result in suboptimal care.
- 2. Fragmented Care Systems:** Healthcare systems are not adequately equipped to provide coordinated care for older adults with cancer, resulting in disjointed services and poor communication among healthcare providers. This fragmentation can adversely affect treatment adherence and outcomes.
- 3. Barrier to Access:** Older adults may face barriers to accessing cancer care, including functional issues, transportation challenges, cognitive impairments, and socioeconomic factors. Advocacy is needed to address these barriers and promote equitable access to cancer care.

## SIOG CONSORTIUM INITIATIVES

SIOG aims to work with its external stakeholders by working in coordination through the SIOG Consortium on the following initiatives:

- 1. Defining “Older Adults” to external stakeholders:** SIOG as a multidisciplinary society has long ago moved away from chronological age as the sole driver of cancer treatment decisions. However, it has since been recognized that external stakeholders - other clinicians, regulatory, industry, investors and funders - lack the extensive experience and need a more informed guidance on this.
- 2. Enhance Research Participation:** Encourage the enrolment of older adults in cancer research by designing age-appropriate, more inclusive clinical trials with meaningful endpoints evaluating also the impact of emerging treatments on patient-centric outcomes. This includes utilizing ageing-related endpoints and outcomes that account for the unique characteristics of older adults.
- 3. Develop Comprehensive Care Models:** Promote the development of integrated care models that provide holistic, multidisciplinary support for older adults with cancer. This involves collaboration between medical oncologists, geriatricians, nurses, surgeons, radiation oncologists, social workers, and other relevant professionals to create individualized care plans that take into account not only the cancer, but also comorbidities, key health domains and psychosocial factors.
- 4. Educate Healthcare Providers:** Training programs for healthcare providers should enable them to address the unique needs of older adults with cancer. This education should allow oncology professionals to learn the basic principles of geriatrics, but also effective communication strategies, leadership to drive change in clinical practice, and the importance of shared decision-making in treatment planning for this large patient population.
- 5. Initiate an Overarching Research to Practice Program:** SIOG aims to develop a Research to Practice program as it facilitates the translation of research into clinical practice, promotes evidence-based care, fosters interdisciplinary collaboration, and addresses the unique challenges faced by older adults with cancer. By investing in this program, SIOG can enhance the quality of care, improve patient outcomes, and solidify its role as a leader in geriatric oncology advocacy and practice.
- 6. Advocate for Policy Change:** Engage in policy advocacy to promote funding for research, improve access to care, and ensure that older adults are at the forefront of cancer care policies at global level. This includes lobbying for reimbursement models that support comprehensive and coordinated care for older adults and funding mechanisms to support research and training.
- 7. Raise Awareness and Support:** Implement awareness campaigns that educate the public and healthcare providers about the specific challenges faced by older adults with cancer. Building a support network can empower patients and their families, fostering a community that advocates for their rights and needs.



## WHY JOIN?

Industry, funders and investors in oncology should consider joining the SIOG Consortium for evidence-based advocacy for older adults with cancer for several compelling reasons:

### 1. Improved Understanding of Patient Needs

- a. **Targeted Research:** Collaborating with the SIOG Consortium allows industry, investors and funders to gain deeper insights into the specific needs, preferences, and outcomes for older adults with cancer. This understanding can inform better drug development processes, focusing on establishing new standard of care with better efficacy and safety profiles for this large population.
- b. **Real-World Data:** Engaging with SIOG-affiliated investigators for real-world evidence and data (*subject to compliance and/or Conflict-of-Interest clearance/data-sharing agreement*) which can help companies better assess the effectiveness and safety of emerging treatments among older adults and existing unmet needs in oncology, guiding the design of clinical trials.

### 2. Enhanced Clinical Trial Design

- a. **Increased Recruitment:** By participating in the SIOG Consortium, companies and academia can help identify barriers to clinical trial participation for older adults and work collaboratively to overcome them, thereby improving recruitment rates for industry, funders, investors and academic studies.
- b. **Age-Appropriate Endpoints:** Working with SIOG and experts in the field of geriatric oncology can lead to the establishment of more relevant clinical trial endpoints that gain insight on the impacts of novel treatment options on the unique health status and concerns of older adults.

### 3. Regulatory Benefits

- a. **Informed Application:** Engaging with the SIOG Consortium can demonstrate tangible commitment to addressing the challenges faced by older adults, anticipating considerations that may emerge during the Health Technology Assessment process and facilitating smoother interactions with regulatory bodies. A focus on evidence-based advocacy can result in more robust submissions that highlight patient-centered outcomes.
- b. **Guidance on Regulatory Compliance:** SIOG Consortium membership can provide a framework for industry, investors and funders to access insights on best practices and on navigating regulatory requirements specifically related to older populations.

### 4. Market Expansion

- a. **Access New Markets:** As the general population ages, the market for cancer therapies aimed at older patients is rapidly growing. By addressing the specific needs of this demographic, industry can capture a significant segment of the market.
- b. **Build Brand Reputation:** Commitment to advancing care for older cancer patients through participation in the SIOG Consortium can enhance a company's reputation as a leader in equality, diversity and inclusion and patient advocacy, thereby positively influencing market perception.

### 5. Collaboration and Networking Opportunities

- a. **Partnerships:** Being part of the SIOG Consortium enables industry, funders and investors to collaborate with healthcare providers, researchers, and patient advocacy organizations. These partnerships can foster innovative solutions and drive collective impact.
- b. **Knowledge Sharing:** Engaging with a diverse group of stakeholders within the SIOG Consortium facilitates knowledge sharing and may lead to new ideas, practices, and strategies that can benefit drug development and patient care.

## 6. Advancing Innovation

- a. **Collaborative R&D:** the SIOG Consortium can drive collaborative research and development efforts focused on addressing the complexities of cancer treatment in older adults, leading to innovative therapies that cater to the needs of this population.
- b. **Focus on Holistic Care:** Emphasizing a patient-centered approach can motivate industry, investors and funders to explore and bankroll multidisciplinary innovations, such as supportive care interventions that accompany emerging cancer therapies.

## 7. Reimbursement and Policy Support

- a. **Advocating for Policy Changes:** By joining forces with other stakeholders, industry, investors and funders can be part of advocacy efforts aimed at influencing health policy, reimbursement practices, and healthcare funding that supports better access and outcomes for older patients.
- b. **Value-Based Care Models:** Participation in the SIOG Consortium can help to shape and promote value-based care models that recognize the complexity and cost-effectiveness of treating older cancer patients, potentially leading to better reimbursement scenarios.

# CONCLUSION

Evidence-based advocacy for older patients with cancer is crucial in addressing the unique challenges they face and improving their overall health outcomes. By prioritizing research, promoting integrated care, educating providers, advocating for policy changes, and raising awareness, we can create a more supportive and effective healthcare environment for older adults diagnosed with cancer. It is ethical and our collective responsibility to ensure that this large, vulnerable population receives the care and support they deserve.

And for industry, funders and investors -these organizations have much to gain from joining the SIOG Consortium. Through enhanced understanding of patient needs, improved clinical trial designs, regulatory advantages, market expansion opportunities, and collaborative innovation, such partnerships represent a strategic opportunity to not only benefit older adults with cancer but also to drive business growth and strengthen their position as leaders in the market.



SIOG is the leading international organization serving health professionals in field of geriatric oncology. Industry, funders and investor networks active in oncology and related fields benefit in many ways by being associated with SIOG. These networks can raise awareness of their specific strengths and areas of expertise by seeking advice from SIOG's expertise and international reputation and by having excellent access to a variety of resources and target audiences. SIOG Consortium Members can benefit from direct access to SIOG initiatives, getting informed of guidelines and recommendations from SIOG which might guide the future business of consortium members.

## ENGAGEMENT LEVELS

SIOG CONSORTIUM MEMBER BENEFITS (per year)	Nexus Member (EUR 40,000)	Catalyst Member (EUR 25,000)	Momentum Member (EUR 15,000)	Horizon Member (EUR 10,000)
<b>Invitation to Co-Chair</b> a SIOG Consortium Working Group	✓			
<b>One meeting</b> with the SIOG Leadership at the SIOG Annual Conference or ESMO or ASCO	✓			
<b>Acknowledgement</b> in the Abstract Book of the SIOG Annual Conference (SIOG conference abstracts are published in an abstract book supplement to JGO)	✓			
<b>First-hand insights</b> and expert review panels for the creation of educational materials in geriatric oncology	✓			
<b>Joint Social Media Campaign</b> on Cancer Awareness Days – (topic(s) to be jointly discussed)	4	2		
<b>Invitation to 1 representative</b> to attend the SIOG Presidential Session at the SIOG Annual Conference	✓	✓		
<b>Customized meetings</b> with SIOG experts (Members of SIOG Task Force, Committees, Faculty)	4	3	1	
<b>Invitation for a representative</b> to join a SIOG Consortium Working Group	✓	✓	✓	
<b>Free exhibition</b> display at the SIOG Annual Meeting (space only)	18 sqm	12 sqm	9 sqm	6 sqm
<b>Complimentary registrations</b> to attend the SIOG Annual Conference in which the in-person SIOG Consortium Meeting will be scheduled as well	8	4	2	1
<b>Complimentary registrations</b> to attend the SIOG Consortium Online Meeting every 4 or 6 months	8	4	2	1
<b>Acknowledgement</b> as a Consortium Member in the SIOG Newsletter and on displays and conference programme/materials at the SIOG Annual Meeting	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Access</b> to position papers, working group reports, digital content (from conference and workshops) and any other outputs from the SIOG Consortium	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Access</b> to the SIOG Consortium Platform to join other members in promoting evidence-based advocacy for older adults with cancer	✓	✓	✓	✓





## CONTACT DETAILS

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