

Editorial

The 64th ASTRO Annual Meeting recently took place in San Antonio, Texas, USA, from the 23rd to the 26th of October 2022, in a successful hybrid form. The general theme was “Emotional & Artificial Intelligence (EI & AI)-Caring for the Patient in a Wireless Word”: very provocative and current. Telemedicine and artificial intelligence are already changing today’s Radiation Therapy landscape and will undoubtedly do even more so in the future. However, it is very likely that direct human contact between healthcare professionals and oncologic patients and their caregivers will remain a crucial pillar in the holistic process of cancer diagnosis, treatment and long-term follow-up.

In parallel to the outstanding progress in systemic therapy, particularly the latest developments in immuno-oncology, and the introduction of more potent and/or selective targeted molecular therapies, radiation therapy (RT) is evolving considerably. It is safely and efficiently delivered in more than 50 % of cancer patients, and in approximately half of them with curative intent. Among the current days’ attributes of modern complex RT are: higher precision, speed and comfort for patients, by reducing the total time of the RT (by hypofractionation or simultaneous integrated boost, for example for prostate or breast cancer).

Besides first calls or updated results of randomized clinical trials for various types of cancers, particular importance was given in the ASTRO 2022 program to the EDUCATION of ALL radiation oncology professionals to remain current with the state-of-the-art techniques, through dedicated sessions for physicians, physicists, technologists, and psychologists. In this setting, interactive and practical radiation oncology sessions were highly attractive, tackling the recently updated ASTRO guidelines in different cancers, such as brain or endometrial cancer.

Specific issues related to stereotactic RT were addressed during dedicated sessions for oligometastatic disease, lung, breast, digestive tract (in particular for pancreatic cancer and hepatocarcinoma), prostate and other types of cancer. Sarcomas, lymphomas, paediatric cancers and other rare cancers were not neglected, as well as particular techniques of RT such as Flash therapy, brachytherapy or targeted ligand binding irradiation.

Networking and direct interaction between institutions, professional associations, industry, sponsors, residents, specialists and experts from all over the globe were facilitated and highly encouraged, contributing to an engaging interdisciplinary forum-like experience, and opening further potential developments in the exciting field of high-quality radiation oncology, to mostly benefit patients and reducing social, ethnic, religious and geographic disparities and inequities.

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