



# CONFERENCES

## Klaas Breur award



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### *What does this award mean to you?*

I am extremely privileged and grateful for receiving the Breur award, the so-called “gold medal”, which is the highest honour that is conferred on a member of the European Society for Radiotherapy and Oncology (ESTRO) in recognition of a major contribution to European radiotherapy. European radiation oncology has always been close to my heart, and taking up a scientific and professional role to foster it and to strengthen its place in the European multidisciplinary landscape has been a logical extension of me being a radiation oncologist.

### *To whom would you like to dedicate your award?*

An award is never down to the merit of just one person, but is the fulfilment of a strong collaboration of a group of people who have the same spirit and vision. I therefore want firstly to dedicate this award to my close colleagues and friends in the health economics in radiation oncology (HERO) core team, with whom it was a pleasure to share work and quality time. But I would also like to mention all others who contributed from near and far, as without this large group of professionals who dedicated time to bring this project on, we would not have been successful.

### *What is your next challenge?*

There are so many! There are projects on lung cancer and oligometastatic disease that I will be involved in, there are big projects in the hospital and my department that will demand a lot of my attention. But staying on the HERO topic, the next chapter on value-based radiation oncology is starting soon, and I very much look forward to that. We have also submitted a proposal for a European project that works along the same lines; let's hope it will be accepted.

### *What do you think are the next challenges for the radiation oncology community?*

I am convinced that basic, translational and clinical research should go hand-in-hand with health-services research, also in the field of radiation oncology. This is in my view key to the future of our discipline, as better outcomes for cancer patients can only be achieved if the introduction of innovative radiotherapy within the often-limited healthcare budget can be secured. Performance of

health-services research was unusual when I was a trainee, so it is a pleasure to see that it is increasingly recognised nowadays, and that young professionals want to learn more of it.

### ***What have been the highlights of your career?***

Meeting Professor Dr Emmanuel van der Schueren, my first mentor, was fundamental in my career. He was a founding father of the European Society for Radiotherapy and Oncology (ESTRO), together with Klaas Breur. He accepted me as a radiation oncology trainee, and he introduced me to the financial, organisational and quality aspects of our discipline, which would become the central themes of my PhD and my later scientific work. After my PhD, this knowledge of health-services-related topics remained dormant until I was invited to become co-chair of the ESTRO-HERO project. This really fostered the scientific work I have been doing, besides my clinical involvement, which is mainly in lung cancer, and enabled me to meet a lot of ESTRO colleagues in Europe and beyond. I am convinced that this was also how, at some point, I was approached to run for president of ESTRO, a title I was happy to carry between 2014 and 2020, and a role which deepened my interest in and sympathy for the Society. Being able to work for such a fantastic group of professionals, and (with all others in the governance) defining how ESTRO should evolve in the changing context of multidisciplinary oncology, has been a great pleasure.

### ***If you hadn't been a scientist, what would you like to have been?***

I think I would have been an architect! So I hope that the new house that I have been searching for a while now will soon cross my path, so that I can at least take up some of that architect ambition!

