



# RTT

## The national conference of French radiation therapists

On Friday 23 June, French radiation therapists (RTTs) gathered for their seventh national conference in Rouen (1). The radiotherapy committee of the Association Française du Personnel Paramédical d'Electroradiologie médicale (AFPPE, the French Association of Radiographers and RTTs), prepared a programme that highlighted the evolution of the role of RTTs. In total, 108 RTTs and 29 students attended the conference; there were 13 oral presentations and four posters.

Regarding the subject of how the role of RTTs has changed over time, two talks were on clinical task shifting. In the first talk, the implementation of a collaboration protocol between radiation oncologists and RTTs was explained by Cécile Cavalerie (Bordeaux). In the past, radiation oncologists were the only healthcare professionals who were allowed to validate images that were obtained daily for radiation treatment. Cécile talked about how advanced technology had enabled a shift of this responsibility from radiation oncologists to RTTs. The collaboration protocol is a document that defines task shifting; RTT education is specifically noted as well as the type of evaluation. In the second talk on this subject, Sébastien Fréard (Avranches) explained his role with regard to patient follow-up and toxicity assessment for breast cancer patients. He was given these new tasks after he obtained a university degree in clinical practice at the Paris Saclay University (2).

These talks gave attendees the opportunity to discuss advanced practice. It's no surprise that French RTTs would like to be acknowledged as the main actors in task shifting and to take on the responsibilities of advanced practice in their discipline. For the community, it is clear that this change would widen access to radiotherapy and would improve not only the quality of care but also the RTTs' levels of job satisfaction. French RTTs are undertaking more research than before. The first oral presentation was given by Sophie Boisbouvier (Lyon), who presented her work on a device to position patients upright for radiotherapy and more specifically her recent research into the positioning of pelvic cancer patients (3). Coralie Bourgeon-Tachin spoke about her research project "RespEcran", which means "breath screen"; its main objective is to evaluate an antimagnetic screen that helps patients to hold their breath during abdominal and lung stereotactic treatment in an MR-Linac. This project was funded by an AFPPE research grant.

Pierrick Gentil (Clermont-Ferrand) presented a talk on the implementation of stereotactic radiotherapy for patients suffering from trigeminal neuralgia and the role of RTTs in this treatment. This talk highlighted the importance of the RTTs in patient support, both before and during treatment. The important role of RTTs in patient support was also demonstrated by Abdelkader Djellouli (Villejuif), who gave a presentation on brachytherapy for children.

An oral presentation on the use of essential oils and hypnosis by Anthony Lempreur and Arthur Bonnin (Avranches), and another on the work of RTTs specialised in wounds and healing by Tiphaine Deperrois (Rouen), showed how patient stress levels could be decreased and their comfort and cooperation improved with the implementation of some interdisciplinary activities.

A patient-partner shared with the RTT community his role as an educator of other patients through the implementation of a specific education programme both before and during prostate treatment. Finally, two educators, Maxime Soulabaille and Arnaud Filly (Rennes), presented their virtual reality programme that shows students the journey that patients take through radiotherapy. This is a great tool that could help students to understand and be attracted to a career in radiotherapy.

The national conference is fantastic; each year more RTTs attend and always there are brilliant presentations. It is with a lot of impatience that radiotherapy committee members wait for the submissions to the eighth national conference in Rennes, which will take place in 2024.



**Sophie Boisbouvier**  
Radiation therapist, MSc  
Léon Bérard Center  
Lyon, France



**Philippe Le Tallec**  
Chair of the RTT committee of AFPPE  
Montrouge, France

- (1) [7ème journée nationale AFPPE des MERM en radiothérapie - YouTube](#)
- (2) [University-degree-created-in-advanced-clinical-practice-for-French-speaking-radiation-therapists-RTT-docx.pdf \(estro.org\)](#)
- (3) Boisbouvier S, Boucaud A, Tanguy R, Grégoire V. Upright patient positioning for pelvic radiotherapy treatments. Tech Innov Patient Support Radiat Oncol. 2022 Nov 28;24:124-130.

