



SCHOOL

Course Report

Appraisal of the ESTRO Upper GI course

25-28 March, 2023

Florence, Italy

I had the pleasure of attending the ESTRO course that was held in March in Florence, Italy, on the technical and clinical challenges that radiation oncologists face in the treatment of the upper gastrointestinal (GI) tract.

I attended this course first in 2017 and then returned in 2019, 2021, and 2023. My repeat attendance attests to its high quality and usefulness in guiding clinical practice, especially for those who sub-specialise in GI malignancies. The course provides an intense biennial update on the most current evidence regarding best practice, with an overview of ongoing and planned clinical trials the results of which will guide our future clinical considerations. Furthermore, it provides a practical view of current and emerging technologies and ways in which these can be integrated into our radiation oncology departments and how they can be used within our multidisciplinary teams.

I found that the programme provided a well-considered balance of multidisciplinary input from world-leading experts in oesophageal, gastric and pancreatic malignancies who had radiation oncology, medical oncology, surgical oncology, medical imaging and medical physics viewpoints. Despite the course being run by ESTRO, the faculty ensured that the content was not biased towards European systems, but presented a wide international perspective on clinical guidelines and practical considerations in clinical practice.

The faculty, led by the course director, Professor Vincenzo Valentini, made the course very enjoyable and thought-provoking due to their constant presence and approachability, and the clear enthusiasm and bonds that they shared as a group. This was the first face-to-face upper GI course that had been held since the COVID-19 pandemic, so it was particularly rewarding to connect with both faculty and international attendees in person and to share our experiences regarding what had clearly been a challenging few years for all. There was awareness of the humanistic aspects of our work, and the final presentations by Prof Valentini and Dr Hanneke van Laarhoven highlighted the future of patient-centric holistic care. I believe this topic is a timely and important reminder to us all as we emerge into a new era of clinical practice built on the lessons learned from a global pandemic.

I would like to thank ESTRO, Prof Valentini, faculty members and Andrea Collavini, the course manager, for the delivery of yet another excellent course.



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