



# SCHOOL

## Course report

### Multidisciplinary Management of Brain Tumours

6 & 13 December 2021, online

#### Course directors

- *Sarah Jefferies, clinical oncologist, Addenbrooke's Hospital - Oncology Centre, Cambridge (UK)*
- *Gianfranco Pesce, clinical oncologist, Oncology Institute of Southern Switzerland, Ospedale S. Giovanni, Bellinzona (Switzerland)*

#### Could you please briefly introduce yourself?

My name is Katherine Belessiotis-Richards, and I am a clinical oncology registrar at University College London Hospital (UCLH) in London, UK. I am currently on the clinical oncology training scheme in North Central and East London Deanery, in my speciality trainee fifth (ST5) year.

#### Why did you choose to attend this course?

I am currently working in central nervous system (CNS) oncology at UCLH and I felt that this course would give me an excellent overview and grounding in the treatment of brain tumours to further my knowledge and improve my care and management of these patients. It is also an area that I am considering for my future career and therefore I was drawn to it.

#### What aspects of the course were most interesting to you and why?

I particularly enjoyed the talks regarding management of glioblastoma, a tumour that has poor and devastating outcomes and for which there are limited treatment options beyond conventional chemoradiation and adjuvant chemotherapy. Also I very much enjoyed the radiotherapy planning sessions, which really helped to frame the whole course and were an excellent learning opportunity and resource for participants. Finally, I considered that the session on brain metastases was very relevant to my daily practice, as we deliver GammaKnife™ stereotactic radiosurgery at my centre and I attend a weekly brain metastases clinic.

#### Did the course activities improve your knowledge and skills in the relevant subject?

I think the online approach was very well thought out and enabled interactive conduct of the sessions, so that the knowledge gained was better consolidated. This included the pre-course work, which I found very useful, and the breadth of speciality talks, which were delivered in a concise and relevant way during the course itself. I also found it useful and important to review the updated World Health Organisation (WHO) classification of brain tumours, as this will have an impact on the multidisciplinary team.

#### Did your course meet your expectations? If so, how?

Definitely. I found it to be engaging and interesting and, despite it being online due to the pandemic, I felt that the course organisers were able to maintain our concentration with a well thought-out and relevant clinical schedule, interlaced with discussion forums and practical sessions. Of the sessions I have attended on the `transition-to-online` platforms, this course has definitely been one of the stronger ones.

## List three important takeaways following the course.

- Think about the ultimate goal when treating patients - will their survival improve to the detriment of their quality of life?
- Bear in mind the significance of subtle signal abnormalities on multimodality imaging during contouring for radiotherapy planning.
- Treatment of cancer is a multidisciplinary effort and it is important to understand it and stay up-to-date with the techniques that are offered by subspecialist colleagues to improve patient outcomes.

## How will what you have learned be implemented in your daily clinical practice?

I currently see and treat a wide range of CNS tumours and this course was essential in laying down the foundations for my day-to-day job. I also found it useful to discuss the management of low-grade tumours, as I have come across fewer of these cases than of high-grade tumours.

## How would you encourage someone who has never been to a European Society for Radiotherapy and Oncology (ESTRO) course to join this course?

I actively encourage people to attend this course, not only for the great content and delivery but also for the planning exercises, which add an extra dimension to the sessions. The ease of booking and affordability of ESTRO courses, as well as the variety of topics offered, means there is something for everyone. I found the organisers and administrative team to be very welcoming, encouraging and responsive; the online resources available to participants are also very useful. It was a comfortable environment in which to ask questions, which helped us get more out of each lecture.



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