

Editorial

Welcome to Volume 2 Issue 2 of the *Journal of Radiotherapy in Practice*. Firstly, the Editorial Board would like to welcome two new members: Steve Edwards, a Macmillan Information Consultant from the Northern Region, Yorkshire, and Sara Faithfull, Leader in Cancer Care at the Institute of Cancer Research in London.

We are also pleased to announce that, from 2001, the Journal has been accepted for abstracting and indexing by EMBASE, the Excerpta Medica database. The publishers have also been invited to submit the Journal for consideration by the Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL).

The recent publication of the NHS National Cancer Plan highlights the fact that cancer services are high on the political agenda. This is not a surprise given that recent statistics demonstrate that cancer has now become the UK's number one cause of death. The Cancer Plan will have a major impact on the radiotherapy and oncology services given the major investment in equipment and staff. The Plan has four main aims:

1. To ensure cancer patients get the best treatment, support and care.
2. To improve the equality of treatment, support and care across the country.
3. To build on the future through investment in staffing, facilitating research, to improve the cancer services for future generations.

We believe the Journal is developing into a vital forum, which will assist in the realisation of some of these aims.

The Guest Editorial in this issue is by Peter Griffiths who highlights the increasing contribution positron emission tomography (PET) is making to the routine management of patients in oncology. Griffiths argues the case for wide access to PET technology and emphasises the implications this will have in the management of a range of oncology patients.

The importance of patient immobilisation and real-time corrections of set-up errors in conformal radiotherapy for prostate cancer are highlighted in the article by Wu et al. The authors draw some important conclusions and recommendations in ensuring that organ motion is minimised and taken into consideration during treatment.

In the third article, Ethna Glean et al., the Clinical Guidelines Working Party of the College of Radiographers, undertake a comprehensive review of the published literature, and service literature given to patients on the intervention for acute radiotherapy induced skin reactions in cancer patients. The Working Party makes evidence based recommendations for the development of clinical guidelines for use by the College of Radiographers. Since undertaking this research, these guidelines are now available in a booklet form and are available from the College for use by all professional practitioners working with these patients.

Christine Blyth et al. describes an innovative approach to changing service delivery to minimise the time between consent and the delivery of radiotherapy for palliative patients. Through a detailed service analysis and the role development of the therapy radiographer in the treatment of palliative patients, they report reduced waiting times for these patients and an increase in quality experience, perceived by the patients and their families.

In the next article, Keith Langmack and Donna Routsis evaluate the literature and evidence base regarding the best treatment techniques in prostate radiotherapy. The authors give a detailed analysis of relevant studies in this field and conclude their findings in describing an optimum patient position and radiotherapy technique including immobilisation and target volumes.

In the final article, Steve Killigrew continues his evaluation of the wide ranging issues raised in the use of complementary therapy in the treatment of cancer patients. Steve gives us an in-depth insight into the implication for Cancer Centre Services and the value of these therapies in the treatment of cancer patients.

To conclude this issue, with personal development in mind, there is a brief guide on writing for publication with the aim of encouraging some of the readership to consider writing a paper for the Journal.

Finally, we hope you enjoy this issue. We would very much like to hear your views and comments regarding the Journal, so please write into us. We look forward to hearing from you.

Angela Duxbury and David Eddy
Editors-in-Chief

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