

ESMO Clinical Unit Visit Report

Fondazione IRCCS Istituto Nazionale dei Tumori, Milan, Italy

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Clinical Unit Visit at Genitourinary Oncology Department

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Mentor(s): Dr. Andrea Necchi, Medical Oncology, Fondazione IRCCS Istituto Nazionale dei Tumori, Milan, Italy

The Oncology has always been my field of interest because of the increasing trend of malignant disease in our country and the new challenges in screening, diagnosis, treatment and follow-up. From the beginning of my career in oncology ESMO was one of the most important education organisation which has supported the update of my knowledge with the new development and challenges in the oncology field.

I have always wanted to have an experience in this field from leading cancer centers in Europe and when ESMO announced the fellowship grant for the Clinical Unit Visit it was a chance for me to try. I have been interested to have the opportunity to learn from the Fondazione IRCCS Istituto Nazionale dei Tumori (INT) as one of the international referral center for the treatment and study of cancer and the largest comprehensive cancer centre in Italy.

I contacted Dr. Andrea Necchi, a researcher at Istituto Nazionale dei Tumori, which accepted me for a Clinical Unit visit under his mentorship.

The aim of my 6-week Clinical Unit Visit was to provide a picture of the elements characterizing modern research in GU oncology, to build up expertise in clinical research and having experience on integrating clinical and laboratory specialties in multidisciplinary research and get experience and knowledge on clinical practice management and treatment of GU tumors.

During my stay at INT I participated at daily activities of Dr. Necchi on the weekly plan we have proposed to ESMO. I was presented with the research programs in effect at Fondazione INT Milano, especially with immunotherapy of GU tumors, high-dose chemotherapy with stem-cell rescue for germ cell tumors and the objectives of supportive care for patients with GU tumors.

Education was a part of daily process to which I have attended. During my stay at the INT I had the opportunity to get acquainted with the main concepts, principles and methods of management of genitourinary malignancies and to take part in multidisciplinary cancer treatment and palliative care. Also, part of the activity was the journal club every Thursday, where young doctors analysed new papers from oncology journals.

My daily activity was focused on the medical review and handover in GU ward, management of new patients, current in-patients and ward out-patients attendances, ongoing

clinical and translational trials update, review with consultants of problems that have arisen during the days, laboratory and pre-clinical trials round in GU oncology, ward round in bone marrow transplantation unit for testicular cancer, GU multidisciplinary meeting, GU ambulatory visits and GU radiotherapy visits, treatments and follow up.

With Dr. Necchi I learned many tips on immunotherapy and different ongoing trials on metastatic urothelial bladder cancer, germ cell tumors and penile cancer. Also, I got my first experience with new drugs on bladder cancer that are not available in Albania. Also, I had the opportunity to be involved in the literature review research on the GU tumors.

During the visit, I had the possibility to get knowledge on the new developments in radiation oncology of genitourinary malignancies and treatments protocols. It was a very good opportunity to get experience according CT simulation, delineation, treatment plan technique of GU tumors, patient follow up during and after treatment, side effect management and securing a qualified radiation oncology treatment. I enjoyed the teaching of intensity modulated radiotherapy planning in GU cancer.

I learned a lot during my stay in INT. New knowledge will influence my work in my daily work with GU cancer patients and in organisation of clinical trials and research unit. As part of the GU tumors in my clinic this experience would be a valuable asset to the team of our oncology clinic and will help to implement this practices in order to improve and promote evidence-based treatment. Also, one of the project is to start the journal club in my clinic.

I thoroughly enjoyed my clinical unit visit. I would like to thank Dr. Necchi and his unit for making me part of the team, the GU Department of INT for involving me in the daily clinical practice and management of genitourinary cancers and ESMO for giving me this great opportunity.

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Fatjona Kraja

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