



GOOD SCIENCE
BETTER MEDICINE
BEST PRACTICE

ESMO European Integration Fellowship Report

Host institute:

Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, United Kingdom

Fellowship dates:

18 February – 29 March 2019



Cambridge University Hospitals

NHS Foundation Trust

Fellow: Nina Fokter Dovnik

Institute of Oncology Ljubljana, Slovenia

Mentor: Elizabeth Smyth

Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, United Kingdom

Introduction and purpose of the European Integration Fellowship

Cambridge University Hospitals is one of the largest and best-known hospitals and one of only five academic health science centres in the UK. They are one of the leading cancer care specialist services in the UK, seeing more than 4000 new adult patients a year. As well as being the local hospital for patients living in the Cambridge area, they function as a regional centre for rarer types of cancer. They collaborate on high quality clinical and translational research with the University of Cambridge and Cancer Research UK. Dr Elizabeth Smyth is a consultant in gastrointestinal oncology at Addenbrooke's Hospital. Her research focus is on clinical trials and translational research in gastroesophageal cancer. She is a member of the ESMO GI educational faculty and she was the secretary of the EORTC GI clinical trials group for the period 2018-2021. The purpose of my fellowship was to gain experience in systemic treatment of upper gastrointestinal cancers at a renowned European institution and learn from Dr Smyth who seemed to me like a perfect teacher and mentor from the ESMO educational events where I had had the opportunity of hearing her talks before.

Six-week timetable

<i>Weekly plan:</i>		
Weekday	AM	PM
Monday	CRC clinic Lunch time: CRC MDT	CRC clinic
Tuesday	Trials Unit session	HPB clinic (x2)
Wednesday	8-10am Upper GI MDT Phase I clinic (x2)	Upper GI clinic
Thursday	8-10am Liver MDT OR HPB research meeting	1-2pm HCC MDT Phase I clinic (x2)
Friday	Ward	Fitzgerald lab meeting

Expected transferable skills on return to home institute

I have acquired skills and experience with:

- Systemic treatment of localised upper gastrointestinal cancer
- Systemic treatment of advanced upper gastrointestinal cancer
- Conducting early and late phase clinical trials in gastroesophageal cancer
- Systemic treatment and clinical trials in hepatobiliary and colorectal cancer

Conclusion and acknowledgements

I am deeply grateful to ESMO for awarding me this opportunity and to Dr Smyth for her time and everything she taught me, for her positive attitude and treating me as her equal, for the effort she took to introduce me to her colleagues so that I could see other clinics, the Phase I unit and the ward, for introducing me to the EORTC GI group and including me in one of their projects as a young investigator, for inviting me to write a comment and a review article with her, and for still being there for all my questions when I started working independently as a GI oncologist in my home country. The time I spent in Cambridge was the best learning experience in my entire medical career.

This ESMO European Integration Fellowship was supported by ESMO.