

Editorial

We are pleased to present the first issue of the second volume of the Journal of Radiotherapy in Practice. The readership of the Journal continues to grow, with a significant number of subscriptions from professionals from countries across the world. The Journal continues to receive overwhelming support and positive feedback from many individuals involved in the field of radiotherapy and oncology.

Jan Johnson presents her views in a Guest Editorial on 'What is the point of role development for therapy radiographers in the UK? The case of breast simulation'. In this article, Jan uses her own experiences to explore the reasons why role extension for therapy radiographers in the UK is rapidly being implemented and why it is valuable to the health service. Publication of this article is timely given the recent publication by the Department of Health of a consultation document on the review of workforce planning – A health service of all the talents: Developing the NHS workforce. In this document there is considerable emphasis on the development of new, more flexible, careers for staff of all professions in the UK health service.

The recent rapid technological innovations in radiotherapy treatment planning and delivery have influenced the need for the studies reported in the first three papers presented here. These studies have been possible due to the introduction of complex computer planning algorithms and tools, which allow three-dimensional reproduction of target volumes. These papers all have a similar theme: they identify the need to re-evaluate the treatment techniques used to treat cancers and the most effective way of protecting normal tissue at risk.

The first of these papers, by Maria Law et al., contributes to the debate on the optimum technique for patients undergoing radiotherapy for breast cancer, post lumpectomy. In this paper the authors evaluate three tangential breast techniques used in Hong Kong.

In the article presented by Haycocks and colleagues, the authors undertake dose volume histogram analysis for organs at risk when using a variety of different external beam techniques for radical prostatic irradiation.

The theme of dose analysis is continued in the third paper presented by Vincent Wu et al. who present their findings of dose analysis of three conformal radiotherapy techniques used in booster treatment of nasopharyngeal carcinoma.

In addition, there is an article by P. Bijdekerke et al. who undertake a randomised study comparing the impact of a simulator with CT option to diagnostic CT on workload and patient comfort. This is an interesting study in which the author's balance the requirements of an optimum scan acquisition time, effects on workload and the comfort of the patient.

To conclude this issue, Steve Killigrew presents the first part of a study investigating the use of complementary medicines by oncology patients.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue and we would very much like to receive your comments on the individual papers and views in general regarding the Journal.

*Angela Duxbury and David Eddy
Editors-in-Chief*