



NEWSLETTER

Federation of Asian Organizations for
Radiation Oncology



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Spring
2022

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Greetings



Dear Colleagues,

It is my great pleasure to greet you as the new President of The Federation of Asian Organizations for Radiation Oncology (FARO) through the FARO Newsletter. I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the support and effort from all the FARO members. FARO intends to foster the role of radiation oncology and to improve the basic level of radiotherapy for the benefit of the cancer patients in the Asian region.

FARO was founded in Yogyakarta, Indonesia on November 3, 2014, with the agreement from 11 national radiation oncology societies in Asia. I have participated in the meeting in 2014 and all the events of FARO. It is my great honor to see the progress and achievements of FARO with its membership expanding to radiation oncology societies from 14 Asian countries. In the past years, FARO has implemented many activities in education & training, clinical practice & research, and international cooperation. Thanks to the previous Council Officers and Council Members, FARO has become the most influential entity in radiation oncology in Asia.

COVID-19 has brought severe threat and challenge to the people worldwide. In this hard time, FARO has still made continuous efforts for better cancer care. In the past year, we have successfully held 12 FARO webinars and 1 FARO meeting online with significant participation from our members. It is believable that we could continue to provide a better platform of communication and cooperation. I hope that FARO will make more meaningful contributions in the field of radiation oncology with your support.

Please get together and we will be stronger.

Xianshu GAO, MD, PhD.

President of FARO

Special Report: The 5th FARO Meeting

Stronger Together

by Manuel Martin Lopez

The 5th FARO Meeting was virtually held on 1-3 October 2021 in scientific collaboration with the Philippine Radiation Oncology Society (PROS) as country host entitled "Radiating Together for a Stronger Asia."



There were a total of 945 participants from 14 countries with 453 (47.9%) from the Philippines alone. Malaysia and Indonesia had 132 and 128 respectively followed by India (70) and Pakistan (55). Thailand registered 43, while Japan had 33. The remaining participants came from the Sri Lanka (16), China (15), Bangladesh (13), South Korea (7), Singapore (6), Myanmar (4) and Mongolia (3).

Prof. Shyam Shrivastava, FARO President, delivered a live keynote speech on day 1 — breast/thorax and H&N tracks.

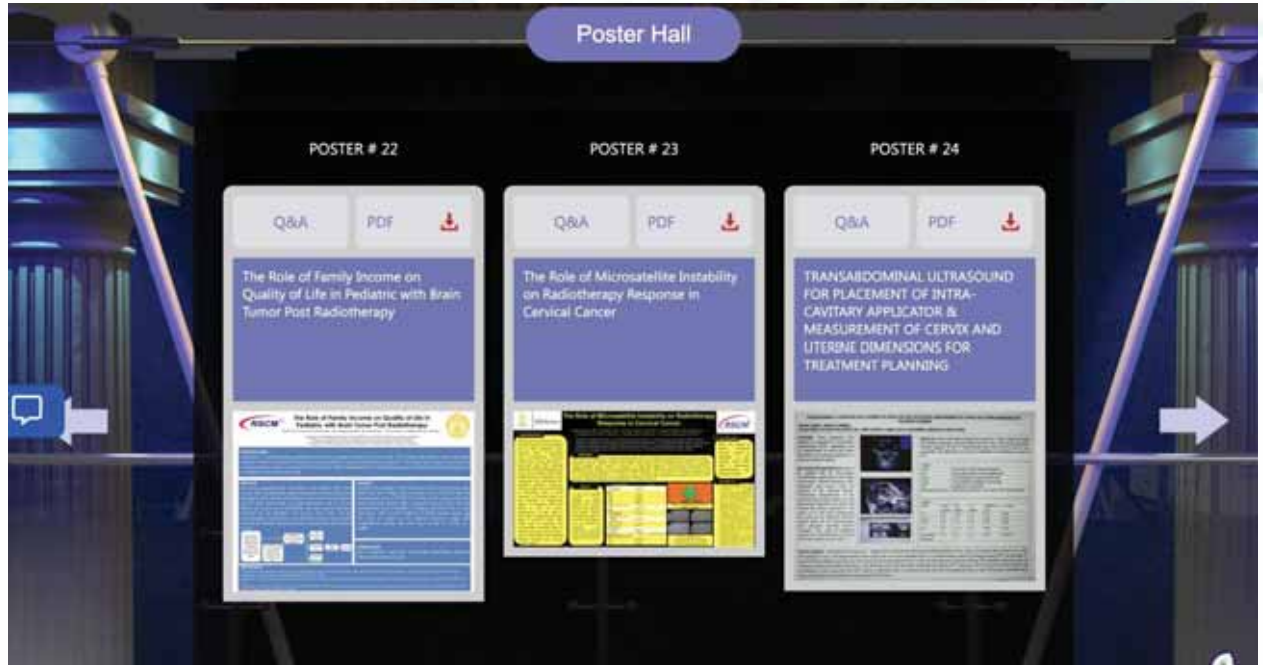


Day 2 covered pediatric, gastrointestinal and gynecologic tracks with live panel discussion for the latter discussing image-guided brachytherapy in cervix cancer. Experts were Dr. Umesh Mahantshetty (India), Dr. Tatsuya Ohno (Japan) and Dr. Ekkasit Tharavichitkul (Thailand) as moderated by Dr. Miriam Joy Calaguas (Philippines).

Day 3 had new frontier and non-clinical tracks wherein Dr. Mary Gospodarowicz (Canada) and Dr. Eduardo Zubizarreta (IAEA) talked about improving global access and quality of radiotherapy accordingly. All lectures and proffered papers were prerecorded.

The virtual meeting capped off with a live general assembly for FARO members with awarding of best research papers by Prof. Soehartati Gondhowiardjo (Indonesia), the immediate past FARO President, and presentation of future directions by Prof. Takashi Nakano (Japan) as the first FARO Secretary General.

A total of 84 abstract submissions were received with the top 10 as proffered paper presentations. The best papers were awarded to Sea-Won Lee from Korea (1st place), Xi Cao from China (2nd place), and Nobuki Imano and Daisuke Kawahara from Japan (3rd place). The next top 40 abstracts were featured in the virtual poster hall with best posters bagged by Aveline Marie Ylanan (Philippines) and Steven Octavianus (Indonesia).



Special Report: The 5th FARO Meeting

A-Team for Gynecologic Malignancies

by Warren Bacorro



Since the launch of the EMBRACE trial by the Gynecology Network of the GEC-ESTRO (Groupe Européen de Curiethérapie - European Society for Radiotherapy & Oncology) in 2008, the concept of image-guided and volume-based brachytherapy has revolutionized the management of cervical cancers, improving local control even in advanced disease and improving toxicity profile of the treatment. The concept has since been applied in the brachytherapy for vaginal and head and neck cancers.

The primary obstacles to its wide adoption in the Far East Asia include lack of capabilities for interstitial implantation and lack of availability of magnetic resonance imaging. In the recent years, the FARO has provided avenues for training for ultrasound-guided and interstitial brachytherapy implantation.

During the 5th FARO Meeting, the Gynecology Segment placed the spotlight on the guidelines on CT-based brachytherapy for cervical cancer, developed in the region – by the Japanese Radiation Oncology Study Group, first published in 2017, and by the Indian Brachytherapy Society in collaboration with the GEC-ESTRO, published last year.

These were presented by world-renowned brachytherapy experts, Prof. Tatsuyo Ohno of Gunma University in Gunma, Japan, and Prof. Umesh Mahantshetty of Tata Memorial Hospital in Mumbai, India. With these guidelines, we might expect a greater adoption of image-guided adaptive brachytherapy (IGABT) in the region, where availability of CT far exceeds that of MRI.

With increasing use of IGABT as well as of imaging for post-treatment surveillance and monitoring, radiation oncologists will be faced with dilemmas in the diagnosis and management of recurrences and of late toxicities. Therefore, the Gynecology Segment culminated with a live session on advanced cervical cancer, for which an interactive case was presented by yours truly of the University of Santo Tomas Hospital in Manila, Philippines.

Professors Ohno and Mahantshetty were joined by the equally prominent Prof. Ekkasit Tharavichitkul of Chiang Mai University in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The session, moderated by Prof. Miriam Calaguas of St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City, highlighted diverse approaches to IGABT, reflecting different professional and cultural environments in the region.





Special Report: The 5th FARO Meeting

Story Behind the Winning Poster

by Aveline Marie Ylanan



Having won the first place in the poster presentation of the 5th FARO meeting came as a surprise. Basically, there were three things that helped me through this journey.

It started when our institution became a COVID referral center, and the University of the Philippines – Philippine General Hospital went from treating 80-100 radiotherapy patients per day to none. At first, it had seemed like we residents had won an unprecedented and well-deserved rest from work. However, this was not the case. Much to our disappointment, what we thought would be a few days of treatment interruption became weeks. Our time and efforts were spent contacting patients and helping them find alternatives for their oncologic care. Our institution worked tirelessly to resume operations safely and effectively. Yet, it was incredibly disheartening when we finally reopened our doors. Our load was nowhere near the 80-100 daily patient count we had before the pandemic. We hoped that they had found other treatment facilities, and were still getting the care they badly needed. But after speaking with them and our colleagues from other institutions, we realized that only a very few of our patients were able to transfer to other treatment facilities. Where had our patients gone? Were they able to get the care they needed?

Having this research topic that I was passionate about was the most important thing that helped me make a compelling poster. Knowing my “why” got me through the difficulties of countless paperwork for ethical clearance, lengthy hours spent on phone surveys, and endless evenings spent trying to organize data into cohesive thoughts.

Of course, all this would not have been possible without the support from my mentors and co-investigators. Their guidance and encouragement were instrumental in helping us create our poster. The lessons I had learned from them throughout my residency was invaluable in creating my work. I still remember the first scientific poster I made was as wordy as the abstract. My advisers at that time, Dr. Calaguas and Dr. Cupino, taught me to choose only the most important text, to add interesting graphs and images, and to deliver a clear message. For this project, it was my adviser, Dr. Cañal, who also suggested to broaden our scope and explore institutions other than our own. She was instrumental in organizing our ideas and data into something more meaningful and understandable. My co-investigators contributions were also hugely valuable. While working on this poster, I was able to collaborate with my peers who were equally concerned about their low patient turnout. We truly are fortunate to have a collaborative community of radiation oncologists in the Philippines, and even in Asia seen through FARO.

Lastly, I learned that having a mindset focused on growth will help not only with poster presentations but also with other aspects of our field. Research still isn't my strongest suit, but I am committed and eager to improve. Having this mindset, an awareness of compelling problems, and brilliant mentors and colleagues will contribute to advancing research and strengthening access and delivery of radiation therapy in our country.

Special Report: The 5th FARO Meeting

Smize (Smile With Your Eyes)

by Daphne Jo Valmonte



It was at the height of the lockdowns in early 2020 when the Philippine R.O.A.R. (Radiation Oncology Association of Residents) was formed. It aimed to bridge the gap between the different training institutions as the pandemic has largely affected our day-to-day routine. Face-to-face scientific meetings, conventions and postgraduate courses were unsafe. However, the camaraderie and hunger for learnings and improvement never stopped, and with the help of technology, we were able to continue our growth through online meetings, webinars, and conferences - one of which was the most recent 5th FARO Meeting 2021: Radiating Together for a Stronger Asia. Being the host for that year, ROAR had the great privilege to end the virtual meeting on a high note. It was decided that a short video depicting the daily routine of the residents-in-training, showing the passion and resiliency to provide the best care for our cancer patients despite the pandemic. As background music, the inspirational OPM (Original Philippine Music) by the Eraserheads: "With A Smile" was used. This song was chosen as it lifts spirits talking about a brighter future, having an optimistic perspective, and giving hope when everyone is tired and disheartened. To make this a bit more sincere and personal, the residents decided to perform the song themselves. Because of the pandemic, it was unsafe to gather in one place. Instead, representatives from the different training institutions were asked to record themselves singing, and then send the file to a point person. The recordings were layered on top of one another, which aimed to achieve the effect of people singing together.

Working with the other residents to come up with the presentation was fun even if it had to be done remotely. The ingenuity and efficacy of the residents made the task enjoyable. This project has proven that doctors are not confined by knowing only how to treat patients but also have talents to showcase as well.

We are able to face the COVID-19 pandemic "With a Smile" because our patients inspire us to become the best versions of ourselves. We are able to face the COVID-19 pandemic "With a Smile" because we take strength from the love and support of our families and colleagues. We are able to face the COVID-19 pandemic "With a Smile" because with tomorrow comes hope, and by knowing that someday, we will all get through this together, stronger.



Special Report: The 5th FARO Meeting

Tweet #ROAR4FARO
by Leonardo Infante



The 5th FARO Meeting has opened doors for the radiation oncology community in Asia to come together in a digital platform especially to the residents-in-training. In order to continue the camaraderie and collaboration, a Twitter account was created in time of its first virtual meeting. The initial tweet post was about Prof. Shyam Shrivastava during his presidential keynote speech, then followed by featuring Dr. Mary Gospodarowicz with a reply tweet

Follow [@faro_asia](#) on Twitter and use [#ROAR4FARO](#) to share your FARO experience because,



@DoInfante

"it's great that despite the current situation, we are still able to update ourselves and have lectures/discussions with experts around the globe, so that we can learn and provide the best care for our patients. Thank you FARO!"

@marykge

"So impressive. @faro_asia program focused on improving access to radiotherapy in all countries in the region. Great collaboration of Asian radiotherapy professional organizations. Stronger together. @iaeaorg @ESTRO_RT @caro_acro_ca @ASTRO_org."

NEWS ARTICLE : 1

But Safety First

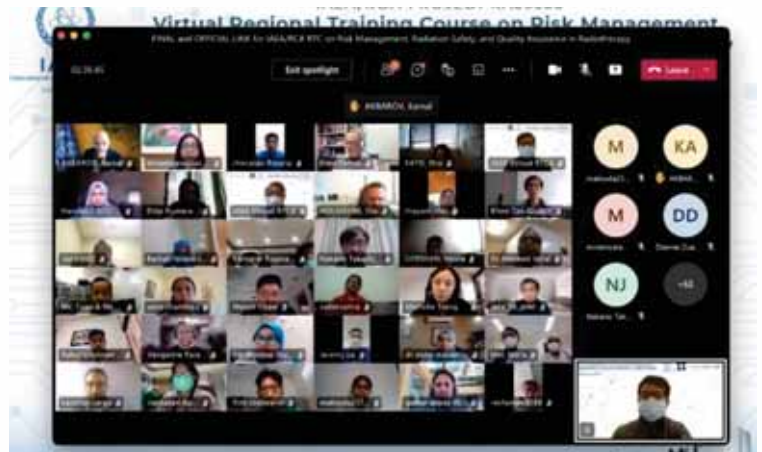
by Jerickson Abbie Flores



The Philippines hosted the IAEA/RCA Regional Training Course on Risk Management, Radiation Safety, and Quality Assurance in Radiotherapy. The Medical City-Ortigas under the leadership of Dr. Enrico Tangco (Course Director), Dr. Miriam Calaguas and Dr. Jickson Flores (Co-course Directors) hosted the event held virtually last August 16-18, 2021, in collaboration with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) under the RAS6086 project "Strengthening Cancer Management Programmes in RCA States Parties through Collaboration with National and Regional Radiation Oncology Societies" and the Philippine Nuclear Research Institute (PNRI). The course/workshop aims to strengthen radiation safety culture in the member countries of IAEA RAS 6086 project through promotion of International Basic Safety Standards and effective use of Incident Learning Systems, in order to reduce radiation incidents and accidents.

Strengthening the awareness of radiotherapy staff on these principles ensures quality radiation treatment that will ultimately benefit cancer patients, and the safety of the radiation workers including the public. The three-day workshop was attended by 70 participants from 17 member countries of IAEA RAS 6086 project. Each institution formed a 3-4 member team composed of radiation oncologist, medical physicist, and radiation therapy paramedical staff (radiation technology therapist/nurse).

This academic activity was a "training the trainers course" in which the attendees must echo the lectures to their respective institutions. Exercises on SAFRON and Radiation Safety were done with the international and local speakers. The major output of this course was an institutional radiation safety research project that was presented on the last day of the event. International speakers include Prof. Tomas Kron (Peter MacCallum Cancer Center, Australia), Dr. Ola Holmberg (IAEA) and Dr. Vesna Gershan (IAEA). Overall, the training course was successful with positive feedbacks from the participants as very informative, interactive and vital in ensuring a quality and safe radiation treatment in the FARO region.



NEWS ARTICLE : 2

Learning Remotely
by John Mark Carabeo



The virtual enrichment for radiation oncology residents is organized to supplement the learnings of the trainees across nine training institutions in the Philippines. During this pandemic era, we have greatly utilized technology which allows us to gather more often, and more conveniently, to discuss different topics and even clarify some puzzling cases. The residents knowledge of the current evidence and contouring guidelines of the different organ systems are reinforced and refreshed.

Preparing for a lecture is always a challenge as you want to keep it simple yet comprehensive. It even adds to the pressure when presenting to your own specialty society because they are already familiar with the lecture topics. But at the same time, you appreciate the opportunity being given and make sure that the knowledge we impart to the trainees are high yield.

What I appreciate as well is the interactive set-up to the trainees. Sharing different experiences and perspectives from the different training institutions, often result into critical thinking with applicability to daily clinical practice.

A total of three lecture series have been conducted starting with prostate cancer as topic last 26 June 2021 with a lecturer, reactor and myself as facilitator for the contouring session. This was followed by breast and rectal cancers dated 28 August and 27 November 2021, respectively.

In my viewpoint, these series of lectures definitely help in creating a standard of knowledge for the trainees based on the current and up-to-date evidences. Moving forward with this pandemic, hopefully this platform continues to progress for the benefit of both the consultants and trainees.



Greetings from Member Organization: PSCO



Pakistan Society of Clinical Oncology (PSCO)

PSCO is the largest body to represent all the specialists treating cancer patients in Pakistan.

Since the birth of PSCO, Society members are increasing day by day from the various disciplines: clinical oncologists, radiation oncologists, medical oncologists, nuclear physicians, hematologists, pediatric oncologists, surgical oncologists, medical physicists, radiotherapy technologists, and specialist nurses trained in cancer patient management are the part of the society. PSCO believes in developing relationships with International Cancer Bodies to contribute in the programs that help in improving experts education & information or cancer care patient management.

In this regards, currently, PSCO has already following international partners:

- SAARC federation of Oncologists (SFO)
- European Society of Medical Oncology-Asia (ESMO-Asia)
- Federation of Asian Radiation Oncologists(FARO)
- North America association of Pakistani Doctors

PSCO holding its scientific annual meeting, organizing symposium and seminars on regular basis.

10th FARO Webinar was contribute by PSCO on the topic of " Pearls & Pitfalls of breast Cancer contouring " held on 25th Sep, 2021.

PSCO hosting annual meeting of SAARC Federation (SFO)ONCO CON 19th- 20th March 2022.



16th SAARC FEDERATION OF ONCOLOGISTS ONCO CON 2022
SAVE DATE 19th-20th March, 2022
 Abstract Submission Date: 15th Feb 2022
 For Registration: www.sfo.org.pk
 For Exhibit: sfoex2022@gmail.com

Organising Committee
 Chairman: Prof. Dr. Ahmed Iqbal Naveed
 Secretary: Dr. Azhar Rashid
 Executive Committee: Dr. Muhammad Faheem, Prof. Dr. Salman Aidi, Dr. Asghar Hussain Asghar

Scientific Committee
 Chairperson: Dr. Hameera Mahmood
 Members: Prof. Dr. Ahsan Jamil, Dr. Rab Nawaz Malik, Dr. Faizla Samad

10th FARO WEBINAR
"PEARLS AND PITFALLS OF BREAST CANCER CONTOURING"
 SATURDAY Sept 25th, 2021

SPECIAL GREETINGS
 Dr. Muhammad Faheem (President-Federal Society of Clinical Oncology (FSCO), Chief Oncologist and Director of NCIH Center Hospital Islamabad Pakistan)

SPEAKER
Dr. Asghar Hussain Asghar
 Consultant Clinical & Radiation Oncologist
 Atomic Energy Cancer Hospital KHAN Karachi, Pakistan

MODERATOR
Dr. Azhar Rashid
 Consultant Clinical & Radiation Oncologist
 NCC Coordinator PSCO, Neoplasia & Cancer Care Institute Karachi, Pakistan

PANELISTS
 Dr. Shahid Hameed (Director Radiation Oncology South East Arkansas, Oncology Pres Staff USA)
 Dr. Hameera Mahmood (Head of Clinical Oncology Department Consultant Clinical & Radiation Oncologist Atomic Energy Cancer Hospital NCC Islamabad, Pakistan)
 Dr. Nasir Ali (Associate Professor, Radiation Oncologist Aga Khan University Hospital, Pakistan Head Karachi Branch)

TIME
 Pakistan 11:00 (PKT), India 11:30 (IST), Bangladesh 12:00 (BDT), Myanmar 12:30 (MMT), Sri Lanka 13:00 (SLT), China 14:00 (CST), Hongkong 14:00 (HKT), Singapore 14:00 (SGT), Kuala Lumpur 14:00 (MYT), Tokyo 15:30 (JST), Seoul 15:00 (KST), Jakarta 15:00 (JKT), Manila 15:00 (PHT)

REGISTRATION LINK
<https://bit.ly/RCSROOM28>

ORGANIZED BY: PSCO | IROG | IEBRA

UPCOMING EVENTS

EVENTS	DATE	CONGRESS VENUE	HOMEPAGE
FARO and Varian Webinar	April 2022	Virtual	Hosted by FARO & Varian
ESTRO Congress 2022	6-10 May 2022	Hybrid (In-person conference in Copenhagen, Denmark and virtual)	www.estro.2022conference.com
2 nd International Congress of Asian Oncology Society (AOS)	16-18 June 2022	Hybrid (In-person conference in Seoul, Korea and virtual)	Hosted by Asian Oncology Society (AOS)
World Cancer Congress (WCC)	18-20 October 2022	Hybrid (In-person conference in Geneva, Switzerland and virtual)	Hosted by UICC

AOS 2022

AOS 2022

2nd International Congress of ASIAN ONCOLOGY SOCIETY
in conjunction with 48th Annual Meeting of Korean Cancer Association

JUNE 16 THU - 18 SAT | SEOUL, KOREA

New Era of Asian Oncology: Challenge, Cure, Care

Hosted by











AOS Asian
Oncology
Society

Korean Cancer Association

Go to Website ►



FARO MEMBERS ORGANIZATIONS

 	<p>Bangladesh Bangladesh Society of Radiation Oncologists (BSRO) http://www.bsro.info/</p>	 	<p>Mongolia Mongolian Society for Radiation Oncology (MOSTRO)</p>
 	<p>China Chinese Society of Therapeutic Radiation Oncology (CSTRO) http://www.csro.org/</p>	 	<p>Myanmar Myanmar Society for Radiation Oncology (MSTRO) https://www.mmcentral.org/societies/myanmar-society-for-radiotherapy-oncology/</p>
 	<p>India Association of Radiation Oncologists of India (AROI) https://aroiwb.org</p>	 	<p>Pakistan Pakistan Society of Clinical Oncology (PSCO) https://psco.com.pk</p>
 	<p>Indonesia Indonesian Radiation Oncology Society (IROS) http://www.pori.or.id/</p>	 	<p>Philippines Philippines Radiation Oncology Society (PROS) www.pros.org.ph</p>
 	<p>Japan Japanese Society for Radiation Oncology (JASTRO) https://www.jastro.or.jp/en</p>	 	<p>Singapore Singapore Radiological Society (SRS) http://srs.org.sg/</p>
 	<p>Korea Korean Society for Radiation Oncology (KOSRO) https://eng.kosro.or.kr</p>	 	<p>Sri Lanka The Sri Lanka College of Oncologists (SLCO) http://slco.lk/</p>
 	<p>Malaysia Malaysian Oncological Society (MOS) https://mymos.my/</p>	 	<p>Thailand Thai Association of Radiation Oncology (THASTRO) https://www.thastro.org/en/</p>

CORPORATE MEMBERS:



Editorial team:

Anna Maria Fineza (PROS)

The 2nd class FARO Leadership Development Program