

MASCC/ISOO International Symposium - Miami, Florida

Minutes of Meeting - Palliative Medicine

June 26, 2004

Present: Declan Walsh, Stein Kaasa, Eoin Tiernan, Mel Davis, Chris Pile, Oana Donea, Paul Glare, David Currow, Ulrich Friedrichson, Sarah Thirlwell, Lucinda Cassells, Jim Cleary, Mari Lloyd-Williams.

The Palliative Medicine Study Group met at the 16th International MASCC/ISOO Symposium in Miami. Discussion focused on the theme of the Palliative Medicine Scientific Session at the symposium, which was entitled **“Dying Patients. What Should be the Standard of Care? Consensus Development.”** The Study Group agreed to undertake a project on Care of the Dying Cancer Patient.

Aim: to establish a MASCC-led initiative to develop consensus on a minimum set of standards of care for imminently dying cancer patients that would be endorsed by the key national and international oncology and palliative medicine organisations worldwide.

Initial objectives were:

1. Consider organizing a Consensus Conference on Care of the Imminently Dying Patient - this could be stand alone, or tagged on to another international meeting (e.g. ASCO, ESMO, EAPC).
2. Speak with Matti Aapro about a follow-up to this year's session at 17th International MASCC symposium in Geneva.
3. Approach ASCO about the possibility of an Educational Session at ASCO 2005.
4. Contact to be made also with ESMO.
5. Other international oncology and palliative medicine bodies to be approached to invite their participation, e.g. ONS, EONS, ANZSPM.

Palliative Medicine Study Section- MEMO 9/2004 Multinational Association for Supportive Care In Cancer

Dear Colleagues:

I am writing to provide an update on the activities of the study section.

European Co-Chair

- I am delighted to announce that Professor Stein Kaasa has kindly agreed to serve as co-chair for the Palliative Medicine study section.

- Stein has served as the President of the European Association for Palliative Care. His original training was in medical oncology but his primary clinical and academic focus is on palliative medicine.

- Further details concerning Dr. Kaasa will appear shortly on the MASCC website.

Clinical Practice

- We sponsored a scientific session at the Miami meeting entitled "Dying Patients - What Should be the Standard of Care?" The object is to establish an international consensus concerning minimum standard for the care of the dying cancer patient.

- This is not intended to replicate other initiatives establishing standards for palliative care but to focus on the specific issues of the actively dying patient.

- The session was very successful; we have representatives from the following organizations: Oncology Nursing Society (Karen Stanley), AAHPM (James Cleary), and MASCC (Agnes Glaus).

- We wish to develop a consensus statement with official signoff by the appropriate organizations concerning care of the dying cancer patient.

- In the future we hope to involve the American Society of Clinical Oncology and the Southeast Asia Pacific Hospice Organization, as well as other palliative medicine organizations around the world.

- The next steps will be to pursue this issue further at upcoming international meetings so that we maintain momentum.

- Eoin Tiernan, of the Palliative Medicine Service at St. Vincent's University Hospital, Dublin is the study section member driving this initiative. His contact information is: Dr. Eoin Tiernan, St. Vincent's University Hospital, of Elm Park, Dublin 4, Ireland, phone 353-1-277-4710, fax 353-1-269-6018, e.tiernan@st-vincents.ie.

Education

- Cancer Pain - We are hoping to develop educational materials on cancer pain assessment and management in collaboration with the pharmaceutical industry.

Research

- We have a proposal to develop a protocol examining the characteristics of dyspnea in cancer patients. The objective will be to conduct a large scale study to adequately describe the characteristics of dyspnea amongst patients with advanced cancer. Further details of this will be forthcoming.

MASCC Annual Meetings

- One objective of the study section has been to increase the representation of the field of palliative medicine at the annual meetings. We have been successful in this. It is important that the discipline of palliative medicine is adequately represented as part of the spectrum of modern comprehensive supportive cancer care.

Palliative Medicine Study Section Membership

- I am delighted to tell you that we have 260 MASCC members signed up as members of the study section. These individuals represent 42 countries, and all Continents. If you know of interested individuals encourage them to contact me.

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