ESMO Educational Structure

ESMO Educational Committee
The very aim of ESMO is post-graduate education for oncologists and the ESMO Educational Committee, chaired by Rolf A. Stahel, is one of the most important bodies within the society.

The ESMO Educational Committee’s (EDC) role is to oversee, evaluate and approve all the ESMO educational activities, ensuring high standards, value and quality. The Educational Committee acts as liaison to international organizations in order to define new forms of collaboration in the educational arena.

In 2006, the Educational Committee began a restructuring process, with the following aims:

• To recruit new, talented and competent medical oncologists and professionals from other oncology specialties to participate in ESMO multidisciplinary educational activities
• To better represent specific disease areas and significant medical oncology topics
• To improve the link between ESMO faculties and the ESMO Guidelines Working Group for the production of ESMO Clinical Recommendations (ESMO CR).

The Educational Committee is also responsible for the activities of the following sub-groups:

• Examination Working Group
• Guidelines Working Group
• Translational Research Working Group
• ESMO International Symposia Working Group
• Sarcoma Working Group
• Global Core Curriculum Task Force
• Cancer Patient Working Group
• Publishing Working Group
• MORA Working Group
• Web Working Group

The ESMO Educational Steering Committee, chaired by Rolf A. Stahel, comprises Andrés Cervantes, Nicholas Pavlidis, Mario Dicato, Dirk Schrijvers and Lorenz Jost, and has been set up to lead the Educational Committee by ensuring timely and efficient decisions and actions.

ESMO Faculty
The ESMO Faculty is composed of oncology professionals of high standing in their respective, multidisciplinary fields. With this Faculty, ESMO has in place a list of experts in medical oncology and related professions dealing primarily with cancer, who support ESMO’s educational activities. This includes speaking at ESMO events, reviewing the ESMO Clinical Recommendations and, as of 2007, collaborating within the restructured online ESMO Clinical Discussion Forum.

In 2006, the ESMO faculty was enlarged both by recruiting new, talented and competent medical oncologists and by inviting professionals from other oncology specialties. This initiative was meant to renew the Faculty, increment the flow of ideas among ESMO members and increase the knowledge base within ESMO in light of its enlarged mission to promote a multidisciplinary approach to cancer research and care.

In addition, in order to facilitate the close collaboration between the ESMO Educational Committee and each of the disease-oriented faculty groups, a key person has been defined to serve as Faculty Coordinator and represent the related group in the Educational Committee.

The newly defined ESMO Faculty is now composed of 19 faculty groups, each with its own Faculty Coordinator. The up-to-date list has been distributed to all the ESMO members and is also accessible via the ESMO Web site at http://www.esmo.org/society/organizationalstructure/faculty/

Examination Working Group
The ESMO Examination Working Group’s (Exams WG) role is to provide a more uniform system of training and evaluation of medical oncologists in Europe and evidence the continuing education and updating of professional skills. In some European countries the ESMO Examination is already required as part of the national curriculum for achieving specialization in medical oncology or to become a full member of the national medical oncology society.

ESMO Full and Junior members can take the Examination as well as members who wish to (re-)certify, since certification expires after five years.

There were a record 192 Examination participants at the 31st ESMO Congress 2006 in Istanbul.
Guidelines Working Group
The ESMO Guidelines Working Group (GL WG) manages the ESMO Clinical Recommendations (ESMO CR), which are clinical guidelines intended to provide the user with a set of requirements for a basic standard of care.

The GL WG generates annual updates and new guidelines through an online platform - as of 2006 – publishes the ESMO Clinical Recommendations as an annual supplement to Annals of Oncology, hosts interactive guideline sessions at ESMO Congresses and promotes ESMO Clinical Recommendations worldwide.

Translational Research Working Group
ESMO uses the National Cancer Institute’s (NCI) explanation to define translational research “Translational research transforms scientific discoveries arising from laboratory, clinical or population studies into clinical applications to reduce cancer incidence, morbidity and mortality.”

Development of biomarkers has the potential to accelerate the translation of basic science discoveries into clinical studies and practice in order to further improve the treatment of cancer patients.

The ESMO Translational Research Working Group (TR WG) was created to address the challenges facing oncologists today, focusing on educational and research issues in oncology.

ESMO International Symposium Working Group
In recognition of the need for both oncologists with different clinical competence and scientists to meet and discuss specific areas of interest, in 2006 ESMO successfully launched a new series of meetings – the ESMO International Symposia (EIS). These important organ-based or specialty-focused Symposia complete the ESMO calendar of high-quality scientific and educational standard events. The Symposia may either be meetings organized solely by ESMO or in collaboration with other medical societies.

Three permanent members of the EIS Working Group (EIS WG) are joined for each event by specialists who bring valuable expertise to the development of the scientific program. Of these Symposia-specific Working Group members, one also takes the role of Local Chair, providing valuable support in the promotion of the symposium and, if required, local logistical assistance.

Sarcoma Working Group
The Sarcoma Working Group (Sarcoma WG) was conceived in 2006 in response to ESMO’s growing interest in ‘organ-based oncology.’ The purpose of the group is to deal with issues pertaining to sarcomas, including the definition of the state-of-the-art and standards of care in Europe, medical education, dissemination of scientific knowledge, problems with clinical research and patient information.

In 2006, this developing community of sarcoma groups was fundamental in the organization of the ESMO International Symposium (EIS) on Sarcoma and GIST, Milan, Italy, 17–18 May.

The first tasks for the Sarcoma Working Group, once formally established in 2007, will be to organize a consensus event in October 2007, to update the ESMO Clinical Recommendations on soft tissue sarcomas and GIST, and to prepare the second edition of the EIS on Sarcoma and GIST in early 2008.

Global Core Curriculum Task Force
The Global Core Curriculum Task Force (GCC TF) is a joint venture between ESMO and the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) whose objective is to realize a global outline that will serve to guide the training of medical oncologists worldwide.

The Recommendations for a Global Core Curriculum in Medical Oncology, published by the Task Force in 2004, is a document which outlines a standardized, educational path for medical oncologists, which if followed, will serve to ensure that patients have an equal chance of receiving treatment from well-trained physicians. The GCC will be updated periodically.

In 2007, the Task Force began a GCC pilot implementation program in the Baltic region in basic research and clinical trials. The objective of this program is to supplement post-graduate training in medical oncology according to the Global Core Curriculum, collect data to monitor project progress and to lobby for medical oncology to be recognized as an independent specialty.

Cancer Patient Working Group
The ESMO Cancer Patient Working Group’s (CP WG) main mission is the continuous optimization of patient care both in Europe and globally, the continuous improvement of cancer-specific information and education, the strengthening of the autonomy of patients and the enforcement of patient rights.

In 2007, the Cancer Patient Working Group has organized the 6th ESMO Patient Seminar during ECLU. The program was developed in collaboration with major European cancer patient groups and will enable 300 participants to discuss important issues related to their daily fight against cancer.

Publishing Working Group
The ESMO Publishing Working Group (PWG) supervises the editorial process set in place for the increasing number of ESMO publications of purely scientific nature (excluding Annals of Oncology). A large proportion of the working group’s activities hinge on the realization of the ESMO Handbook series. In addition, ESMO regularly publishes scientific reports on meetings organized by ESMO or other oncology societies; reports which can be found as inserts in the ESMO Newsletter and online.
2005
• ESMO Handbook of Oncological Emergencies

2006
• ESMO Handbook of Advanced Cancer Care

2007
• ESMO Handbook of Principles of Translational Research
• ESMO Handbook of Genetics and Cancer Prevention

ESMO-MORA Working Group
The ESMO-MORA Working Group was officially set up in 2006, within the recently restructured ESMO Educational Committee. The MORA Working Group plays an important role taking care of the assessment of Meetings, Symposia, Congresses and other ESMO educational activities, ensuring the high ESMO standards value and quality, and taking care of the assignment of educational hours (ESMO-MORA points) for such activities.

Furthermore, its role is to supervise the ESMO-MORA recertification process approval, assess various means of education, and evaluate the post-event reports.

ESMO Web Working Group
The ESMO Web Working Group has been created with the aim of enhancing, improving, and expanding the ways in which ESMO can disseminate scientific information and offer its members useful tools through the Web.

The WWG will strengthen existing features such as access to the ESMO Clinical Recommendations, ESMO Educational booklets and abstracts of ESMO congresses, the ordering and display of ESMO handbooks and the listing of available slots in the ESMO Fellowship programs.

Furthermore the aim of the group is to aim expand useful educational links, offering a list of orphan drugs accompanied with information of their use, creating a section with information about rare tumors and the possibility of asking experts within ESMO in special cases.