

CYPRUS - Milestones in Oncology

Written by G. Christodoulides and N. Katodritis

- **1937**

Radium needles were used at the Nicosia General Hospital for intraoperative applications. The radium needles were stored in a 30m deep hole drilled in the grounds of the Nicosia General Hospital, and raised by rope in a bucket. The first patient treated was a 9 year old girl from Famagusta for Gingiva Hyperplasia.

- **1956**

The first Deep X-Ray Therapy Unit (Siemens) was installed in a private Radiology practice of Dr. Pavlides in Limassol, offering external radiotherapy with operating voltage in the range 50 to 200 kV.

- **1965**

The first Radiotherapy Department was established at the Nicosia General Hospital and offered radiation treatments with a Cobalt-60 unit (Picker 1900 curie source). Dr. D. Souliotis, was the first Radiation Oncologist in Cyprus.



- **1969**

The first Medical Physics department in Cyprus was established by Dr A. Costeas (Ph.D. in Biophysics) at the Nicosia General Hospital in 1969. The first two M.Sc. level medical physicists, Mrs. M. Angelidou and Mr. G. Christodoulides, joined this Department.

- **1971**

Establishment of Cyprus Anticancer Society, a non-government, non-profitable volunteer organization offering palliative care services .

- **1972 – 1998**

A manual Afterloading Brachytherapy system, with Caesium-137 sources started being used for intracavitary applications for gynaecological cancer at the Makarios III Hospital in Nicosia.

- **1973**

A mould room was built and Mr S. Constantas was appointed as mould room technician. Immobilisation shells, wax moulds and prosthesis were individually made.

- **1975 – 2002**

A second Cobalt-60 unit (Theratron 7200 curie activity) was installed.



- **1976**

Anticancer Society operated the hospice “Arodaphnousa”, offering palliative services for in-patients.

- **1985 – 1995**

Dr. H. Soteriou, Clinical Oncologist, created a private Radiotherapy Centre with a Cobalt-60 unit (Shimadzu 3500 curie source). This was operated until the end of 1995.

- **1986**

Establishment of Pancyprian Society of Cancer Patients and Friends, “PASYKAF”, non-government, a non-profitable volunteer organization, offering mainly home care palliative services.

- **1988**

Dr A. Adamou was appointed as the first Medical Oncologist in Clinical Oncology Department at Nicosia General Hospital.

- **1990**

The Cyprus Anticancer Society donated a Multidata 2D Treatment Planning system. The time consuming treatment plans that were done by hand were done and optimized by the computerized 2D system, from this time on.



- **1992 – 2002**

The old Cobalt-60 unit was replaced with an ATC unit 3500 curie activity source.

- **1993**

Treatments with radioactive Iodine -131 were offered at a specially designed room at a private clinic in Nicosia.

- **1995**

The Superficial X-Ray unit was replaced, with a new Pantak unit offering radiation treatments with generating voltage between 50 to 225 kV.

- **1996 – 1998**

A Siemens Stabilipan 300 X-Ray unit was operated by Dr. N. Katodritis, Radiation Oncologist, privately in Limassol, offering mainly superficial radiotherapy treatments.

- **2002**

Establishment of the Cyprus Oncology Society, a scientific body for Oncologists.

- **September 1998**

Bank of Cyprus Oncology Centre (BOCOC) started operations in Nicosia, offering both medical and radiation oncology services. Installation of high tech radiotherapy equipment such as 2 Linear Accelerators (LINAC), HDR Brachytherapy and 3D Treatment Planning system.



- **2000**

First time in Cyprus cancer site specialties were established at BOCOC.

- **2000**

Establishment of Europa Dona Cyprus, member of the European Organization Europa Dona, an advocacy movement for the fight against breast cancer.

- **2005**

The first Multidisciplinary Team Conference (MDT) concerning “Lung and Thoracic Malignancies” was established at BOCOC. MDT’s were gradually expanded to all main cancer sites.

- **2007**

BOCOC as first hospital in Cyprus and Greece was accredited by the audit organization HQS.

- **2007**

Establishment of Europa UOMO Cyprus, member of the European Organization Europa UOMO, an advocacy movement for the fight against prostate cancer.

- **2009**

The 3rd LINAC was installed at BOCOC.

- **2010**

The Council of Ministers has appointed a National Committee against Cancer in order to prepare a National Strategy against Cancer.

- **2011**

Intensity Modulated Radiation Therapy (IMRT) technique was used firstly for prostate cancer. IMRT was gradually applied to all anatomical regions.

- **October 2017**

German Oncology Centre (GOC) started operations in Limassol, offering both medical and radiation oncology services. Installation of high tech equipment such as 2 Linear Accelerators, HDR-Brachytherapy, advanced Treatment Planning system, in house MRI and PET/CT scan.



- **2017**

Stereotactic Body Radiotherapy (SBRT) was offered at GOC.