

MAY 2024

RAYOS CONTRA CANCER

Biannual Newsletter

Message from Ben

DEAR FRIENDS, VOLUNTEERS, & RCC SUPPORTERS,

Around the New Year, I reflected on just how amazing it is that we have been able to accomplish so much as an organization. Thanks to the contributions of more and more new volunteers, as well as more and more who are returning veterans, we impacted over 600,000 (six-hundred thousand) patient lives this past year across the globe. And we are poised to continue helping more lives in limited-resource settings. Knowing the impact that touching even just one life meaningfully can have, achieving this collectively is incredible.

So, it is time for some volunteer recognition! Thus, we would like to invite all supporters of RCC to an RCC Awards Night. Please see details in this edition (page 05).

I also would like to commemorate the life of Dr. Norm Coleman [1] [2] [3], U.S. radiation oncologist who led the way in showing that you can dedicate your life to a mission, and that it is a worthwhile and necessary endeavor to solve the world's hardest challenges. I personally owe Norm so much - he encouraged us to found RCC in 2018 when it was still an idea, and he has been there each step of the way since then as a role model and global health mentor. I encourage others to read [one short piece he wrote that has always inspired me](#). May he rest in peace.

I would also like to acknowledge that through the seasons of RCC, some of our own family members have been diagnosed with cancer or faced other challenging health issues. We extend our thoughts and prayers to you.

Every life matters, and everyone is capable of helping others. We appreciate the deep lineup of RCC supporters and we continue to work hard to help create opportunities that allow willing volunteers to create outcomes that are greater than the sum of their parts. Thank you everyone for your teamwork across different centers, countries, and all of your brilliant spirits. 🙌

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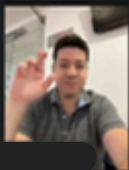
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Course Review

SBRT/SRS IN LATIN AMERICA

From September 2023 to January 2024, we conducted a course on SBRT/SRS in Latin America. The course aimed to ensure safe, proper, and consistent methods for the implementation of SBRT/SRS, assist centers in gaining experience with new paradigms of care, and impart resources that help trainees become future educators. The course was RCC’s largest course to-date, with 1,128 synchronous participants and 418 asynchronous participants!

	Pre-Course (n=718)	Post-Course (n=718)	Percent Change	p-Value
Confidence	2.95	3.61	22.5%	p < 0.01
Knowledge	45.1%	52.7%	16.7%	p < 0.01

Mean confidence across all SBRT/SRS domains increased from 2.95 to 3.61 (p < 0.01), and knowledge scores of SBRT/SRS increased from 45.1% to 52.7% (p < 0.01).

Furthermore, both synchronous and asynchronous participants reported increases in the use or implementation of SBRT/SRS in their centers from the beginning of the course to the end.

Thank you and congratulations to participants who dedicated time and effort over four months to learn more about SBRT/SRS to better serve their communities and patients. Special thanks to Nahuel Diaz, Maximiliano Mo Güell, Eduardo Lovo, Alejandro Blanco, and Diego Mora for leading bonus sessions in the course!

We also appreciate the valuable feedback from participants. We are committed to improving the course experience, especially as it relates to making courses as accessible as possible, future course topics, and measuring success in each course.

Lastly, thank you to all the volunteers and ACRO who made this course possible, from planning and translating materials to teaching, moderating, and supporting the team. Es increíble lo que podemos lograr juntos!



Did you know? The first Latin American Society for Women in Oncology was founded in March 2024. We are thrilled to support the vision and mission of the newly formed “ALAMO”! [Instagram](#)

“Thank you very much for the opportunity to access the course; as a student studying Medical Physics, the information developed in the course was very helpful to me to complement my academic training...I feel that this helped me a lot to find something that I am passionate about and what I want to continue learning about to develop as a person and as a professional.”

COURSE PARTICIPANT
(TRANSLATED)



YouTube Update!

The [videos](#) from the hypofractionation program in Latin America are available on YouTube in three languages—English, Spanish, Portuguese.

The [videos from last year’s IMRT for RTTs course](#) are now available. The videos have Ukrainian subtitles thanks to an initiative with a group of volunteers committed to supporting Ukrainian radiotherapy professionals.

“We have actually improved our documentation and we are so happy for this course as it serves as an eye opener for us as we’re expecting a new and more advanced linac to be installed at our center.”

COURSE PARTICIPANT

“We have ensured that our culture towards documentation is improved on and we also ensured that every staff is involved in the treatment process.”

COURSE PARTICIPANT

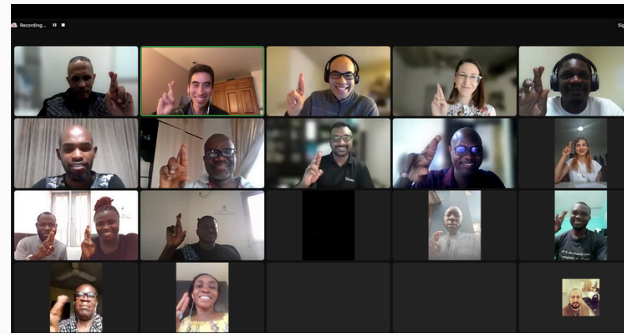
Course Review

DOCUMENTS IN RADIATION ONCOLOGY

Through 5+ years of organizing radiotherapy courses, RCC has created and shared many documents useful for all radiotherapy roles, from RTTs’ daily treatment checklists to physics dose calculation tools.

The ‘Documents in Radiation Oncology’ course was born from a vision of a document library that participants could access and reference from the clinic. Documents could be downloaded, personalized, and used to promote communication and quality cancer care.

The inaugural group of course 48 participants joined weekly Zoom sessions in February and March from five centers in Cameroon, Kenya, Nigeria, and Uganda. Throughout the course, we saw improvement in the



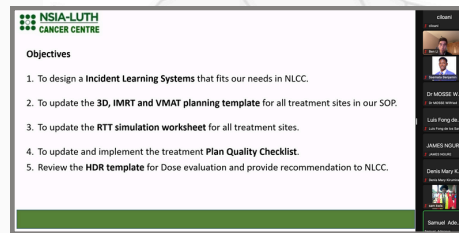
measures for teamwork and communication, as well as a 9.7 / 10 recommendation score from participants.

Additionally, participants continue to implement knowledge learned in the course. We especially want to highlight Victor Ekpo’s leadership in organizing additional training sessions for the team at ASI Ukpo Comprehensive Cancer Centre in Nigeria. Amazing job, Victor, on sharing knowledge to improve cancer care for your community!

We also want to thank all participants, clinic coordinators, BioVentures in Global Health, RCC volunteers, and Jayesh Jayakumar and Hamza Tatli at Elekta for your hard work in developing and implementing course material!



RCC team members met for a retreat in Seattle in January 2024 with the [Elekta Foundation](#) and [BVGH](#) to discuss ongoing projects, strategic goals, and a vision for the future!



Volunteer Spotlight

Nahuel Díaz Giunta



Nahuel Díaz Giunta is a Biomedical Engineer Specialist in Medical Physics and an RCC super volunteer! He works at CETAC Juncal in Argentina, and he is the Chief Medical Physicist at the Centro Oncológico Anna Rocca de Bonatti.

We first met Nahuel through an RCC course, and he generously stepped up to volunteer, offering to help in any way he could. Ever since, Nahuel has been a true blessing for RCC. He has moderated course sessions, provided feedback in course debrief calls, participated in discussion groups, and organized a training session with colleagues on lattice radiotherapy to support other course participants.

Nahuel, your positive, can-do attitude has done so much to enhance radiotherapy in Argentina and around the world. Thank you from all of RCC! 🙌

Samantha Keller



Since starting to volunteer with RCC over the last year, Sam has jumped in to support RCC operations through projects ranging from substantial database work involving thousands of participants and clinics to synthesizing existing published information about the status of radiotherapy in LMICs.

Throughout each project, Sam has embodied the spirit of RCC with her professionalism, positive attitude, and reliability.

This fall, Sam is heading into her first year of medical school at NYU Grossman. They will be lucky to have her, and we can't wait to see what she accomplishes!

REVIEW OF RCC VOLUNTEER SURVEY

One of RCC's goals is to provide meaningful volunteer opportunities for RCC team members around the world. We recently launched a volunteer survey to learn more about volunteer motivations, interests, and preferences.

More than 100 volunteers completed the survey, and in addition to strengthening RCC's ability to mobilize volunteers, the survey highlighted:

- Interest in & motivation for volunteering comes from a love of teaching/education.
- Another aspect of volunteering stems from giving back and believing in health as a human right (equity).
- 50% of respondents are interested in helping any region.
- Those who expressed interest in a specific region preferred Latin America, followed by Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.

“
Last summer's teaching course was instrumental in generating the notion of devoting more time to volunteerism in order to advance the field.
-Trevin Trotman, RTT
”

PUBLICATIONS / PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES

Serguei Castaneda, MD, presented the results of RCC's [2023 SBRT/SRS curriculum](#) at the Radiosurgery Society's annual meeting in March 2024, highlighting the feasibility of an e-learning platform to train radiotherapy professionals.

Maria Caicedo, MD, shared an analysis of RCC's [2023 Hypofractionation curriculum](#) at ESTRO in May 2024, focusing on education as a perceived barrier to the use of hypofractionation in Latin America.

Michael Dysktra, MD, gave an oral presentation at the BinayTara Foundation Conference in Seattle in April 2024 on "[Remote Contouring Education in Latin America: Longitudinal Effects of Asynchronous Resources with or without Synchronous Virtual Lectures](#)," showing how a dedicated volunteer can work with a center one-on-one.

David Martinez Perez, RCC's Director of Education & Training for Latin America, has provided hands-on training on brachytherapy for residents at Colombia's National Cancer Center. Click this [link](#) to read more about his amazing efforts!



Sneak Peek



We have three ongoing and upcoming courses!

Treatment Plan Evaluation in North Africa

- This new program focuses on improving the quality of treatment plans.
- Participants develop practical skills in reviewing scan images, evaluating contouring quality, optimizing plans, reviewing dose & beam arrangement.

Contouring Pelvic Malignancies in South & Central Asia

- This course provides a framework for radiation oncologists to evaluate/improve their contouring skills.
- Educators focus on avoiding common errors and provide tips for contouring disease sites including the cervix, endometrium, prostate, bladder, and others.

Head & Neck Contouring in Latin America (anticipated in June - September)

- The curriculum includes contouring targets, OARS, lymph node stations, and cranial nerves, as well as mitigating treatment toxicities and evaluating plans.
- The course will be conducted in Spanish, and we are excited to support our partners in LATAM.



SAVE THE DATE



RCC is hosting its first virtual Volunteer Awards Night on June 28!

If you have been an active volunteer in the last two years, be on the lookout for more details.

If you have any questions or want to know more, please do not hesitate to reach out at info@rayoscontracancer.org.

Interested in supporting RCC?

Join as a volunteer or refer a friend!

Click on the link below or scan the QR code to fill out the new volunteer form.

[New Volunteer Form](#)



Interested in helping in another way?

Visit our [Donation Page](#)!

If you want to join a program as a participant, please email info@rayoscontracancer.org