

# A Focus on Oral Oncology: MASCC and ISOO

The International Society of Oral Oncology was formed to promote scientific exchange among oncology professionals about cytotoxic therapy and its impact on the oral environment. The Society provides a multidisciplinary forum for scientists and clinicians to collaborate in such areas as the oral sequelae of cancer therapies, new research strategies, and educational initiatives in cancer-related oral morbidity.

ISOO formed an alliance with MASCC in 1998 and, each year, the two societies hold a joint annual meeting. In addition, the MASCC/ISOO Oral Care Study Group works to enhance knowledge of oral complications from cancer therapies and to improve clinical management. There are also many ISOO members in MASCC's Mucositis and Bone Study Groups.

At this year's Annual Meeting in Copenhagen, Ourania Nicolatou-Galitis, DDS, MSc, DrDent, of Greece, became the new ISOO President, succeeding Richard Logan of Australia. Ourania is Professor and Chair, Clinic of Hospital Dentistry at the Dental School, University of Athens, Greece. In her practice, as well as research, she specializes in the diagnosis and management of oral complications of standard and targeted cancer therapies. Such complications can affect systemic response to therapy, as well as oral health-related quality of life. Ourania is the founder of the Hellenic Society of Oral Oncology ([www.oraloncology.gr](http://www.oraloncology.gr)). She is also Chair of MASCC's Bone Study Group.

## An Interview with ISOO President Ourania Nicolatou-Galitis

### *What are your current interests and professional activities in oral oncology?*

I believe that oral oncology is a "mirror of health of the cancer patient" and that dental practitioners must be involved in the management of cancer patients. It is our responsibility to attract and educate them. All of my current professional activities stem from this belief. I am actively involved in research and in the management of oral complications of cancer therapies, as well as teaching oral oncology at both the undergraduate and graduate level, including dental and medical school. I organize annual seminars and "Days of Oral Oncology" for dentists and other healthcare professionals. I've also promoted a focus on oral oncology within the Mediterranean Multidisciplinary Oncology Forum (MMOF). An oral oncology section has been established, and MMOF's biannual meetings will now include an oral oncology workshop.

### *What did you think of this year's MASCC/ISOO meeting? What were the highlights for ISOO?*

The 2015 MASCC/ISOO meeting in Copenhagen was excellent, motivating, and rewarding! MASCC's Study Groups offer a unique opportunity for collaboration within and beyond MASCC/ISOO. A good example is the collaboration between the MASCC/ISOO Oral Care Study Group and the European Society for Blood and Marrow Transplantation (EBMT). This resulted in a jointly authored position paper on basic oral care for hematology-oncology patients and those receiving hematopoietic stem cell transplants.<sup>1</sup> This paper was a highlight for ISOO and, very importantly, serves as a model of collaboration within the MASCC/ISOO platform. Another highlight for ISOO was our Continuing Education Course, Oral Infection in the Cancer Patient. Session 1 included presentations and discussion of changes in the oral microbiome related to cancer and cancer therapy, bacteremia associated with oral infections, oral fungal infections, and antimicrobial resistance. Session 2 focused on potentially malignant oral lesions and the clinical and biological procedures for diagnosing them.

### *What do you see as the greatest supportive care needs in oral oncology generally? And in Greece, in particular?*

While oral oncology is a rapidly evolving field, we need to increase its visibility at the various local, national, and international levels. For example, in Greece, we need well-trained oral and dental oncologists in both our cancer centers and in private settings. I hope that young scientists and graduate students from different countries will establish local oral oncology societies and participate in the MASCC/ISOO community — its study groups and guidelines projects — for the benefit of their patients. In this era of biological, targeted therapies and immunotherapies, there is more than ever a need for oral oncology expertise, including the recognition, classification, diagnosis, prevention, and management of oral complications related to new therapies. These needs can best be met through the collaborative work of MASCC/ISOO.

### *What's next for ISOO?*

ISOO's primary goal is to continue its important partnership with MASCC toward the prevention and management of oral complications in cancer therapy. We look forward to next year's MASCC/ISOO meeting in Adelaide, Australia as an opportunity to reach more young investigators and strengthen collaborative ties with clinical and research partners around the world.

<sup>1</sup> Elad S, Raber-Durlacher JE, Brennan MT, Saunders DP, Mank AP, Zadik Y, et al. Basic oral care for hematology-oncology patients and hematopoietic stem cell transplantation recipients: a position paper from the joint task force of the Multinational Association of Supportive Care in Cancer/International Society of Oral Oncology (MASCC/ISOO) and the European Society for Blood and Marrow Transplantation (EBMT). *Support Care Cancer*. 2015 Jan;23(1):223-36



