

## EDITORIAL

## Innovation showcase: AAPM meeting, electronic safety checklists and RT quality control for lung cancer



**John Suh, MD, Editor-in-Chief**

Welcome to the July issue of *Applied Radiation Oncology (ARO)*! For many, July ushers in vacation plans and Independence Day celebrations, but it also brings another exciting event: The American Association of Physicists in Medicine (AAPM) 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting & Exhibition.

The AAPM meeting, which is the largest gathering of medical physicists in the world, will be held July 20-24 in Austin, Texas and will focus on the theme of innovation—from cutting-edge research, to progressive technologies, to continuing education. Among highlights are a joint symposium with the World Molecular Imaging Society and a two-day track on quantitative imaging. For those ready to gamble on fun, the Texas Hold 'em invitational combines poker with adaptive planning for IGRT. And be sure not to miss the Presidential Symposium on disruptive innovation strategies—by a speed-painting artist, no less.

As the AAPM meeting will remind us, innovation needs to be coupled with patient safety to fully impact the care of cancer patients. Julie Greenwalt, MD, and colleagues from the University of Florida College of Medicine in Gainesville, demonstrate this in their review article, *Reducing errors in radiation treatment through electronic safety checklists*. Dr. Greenwalt discusses how erring is indeed human in radiation treatment, since the majority of RT incidents are caused by the transfer of information from one clinician to another. To reduce errors, her team implemented an electronic safety checklist program into the workflow of an academic radiation oncology department. By reading the article, you can learn how the program flagged potentially serious errors, strengthened communication and reaped a host of additional benefits.

This issue also brings you a review article from Isabelle Martel-Lafay, MD, and her colleagues from France, on the need for RT quality control in reducing treatment toxicity and improving tumor control. The article discusses the association between poorer overall survival and prolonged irradiation in a homogenous group of patients with unresectable stage III NSCLC treated with concurrent chemoradiation and conventional fractionation.

Two case studies are featured in this issue, including the most recent Clinical Review Case Contest winner: Joon K. Lee from the University of Illinois-College of Medicine, Rockford. His case describes the successful use of RT for pain management in a pediatric patient with Gorham Stout syndrome, a rare skeletal disorder. The second case examines organ preservation in a 63-year-old patient with locally advanced larynx cancer.

The Clinical Case Review Contest is an excellent way to share treatment experiences and innovations with your colleagues across the globe. Please review the guidelines at <http://appliedradiationoncology.com/contest> and send in your manuscripts. Remember, knowledge shared is progress gained. Plus, you just may win \$250!

Finally, join me in welcoming Sharon Breske to *ARO* as our managing editor. Sharon comes to us with more than 18 years of medical publishing experience, the last 12 of which have spanned imaging and radiation oncology. She will work closely with me and our esteemed advisory board in coordinating and editing manuscripts, and maintaining our home page at [www.appliedradiationoncology.com](http://www.appliedradiationoncology.com).

Enjoy the issue and summer! If you have ideas on future topics that would be beneficial for our readers, please feel free to contact me at [suhj@ccf.org](mailto:suhj@ccf.org).

*Dr. Suh is the Editor-in-Chief of Applied Radiation Oncology, and Professor and Chairman, Department of Radiation Oncology at the Taussig Cancer Institute, Rose Ella Burkhardt Brain Tumor and Neuro-oncology Center, Cleveland Clinic, Cleveland, OH.*