

Imaging in oncology at CBR

Imagem em oncologia no CBR

Rubens Chojniak¹

Cancer is an increasing cause of disease and death worldwide, and since 2003 it has been the second leading cause of death in the Brazilian population. The increasing incidence of cancer has determined the attention of both public and private institutions, and the establishment of new specialized medical centers.

At the same time, in the past three decades, oncology has achieved revolutionary developments. We have witnessed the development of more effective and less toxic cancer drugs as well as the introduction of less invasive radiotherapy and surgery techniques which minimize the therapeutic morbidity. A better understanding of the cancer mechanisms has allowed the development of new treatment approaches, including the concepts of oncogenetics and target therapy.

Innovations in imaging diagnosis methods have become the main factors for leveraging the improvement in the understanding of the disease and of the assistance offered to cancer patients.

The practice of oncology has always required the maximum capacity and ability of both imaging methods and radiologists, and many of the innovations in the field of radiology have been investigated and introduced as a response to the challenges faced by the practitioners in the assistance to cancer patients.

Nowadays, the imaging methods have become fundamental in every step throughout the assessment of cancer patients, from the disease screening and diagnosis, subsequent decision making on the therapy and interventions, evaluation of the therapy effectiveness, to the post-therapy follow-up of such patients. Also, imaging methods currently constitute the baseline tools in the research of new treatments and prognostic markers.

Such a comprehensive participation has led to the recognition of the critical role played by the radiolo-

gist as a member of the multidisciplinary oncology team. And, with the increase in the number of cancer cases, oncologic imaging is currently a relevant component of the radiologists' workload, therefore it is fundamental to develop and update the knowledge in this field.

In face of such a scenario, and seeking to accomplish its mission of spreading scientific knowledge and preparing professionals dedicated to the area of imaging diagnosis and therapy for the current and future professional demands and challenges, Colégio Brasileiro de Radiologia e Diagnóstico por Imagem (CBR) has created a Commission for Imaging in Oncology.

Such a Commission is constituted of representatives of different Brazilian reference oncology institutions with the objective of enhancing the education in the utilization of imaging resources for the multidisciplinary management of cancer. The members of this commission share the interest in qualifying the performance of professionals in specialized centers as well as of generalists who deal with oncologic cases in a diversified routine, to the benefit of both the professionals and patients, promoting a homogeneous improvement of the health as a whole.

Among the innumerable, current and future challenges in this field of knowledge, we have noticed the necessity of ensuring capacitation and offering of qualified radiological services, in addition to the discussion on a rational introduction of new technologies and standardization in the incorporation of metabolic and functional data into the investigation strategies.

The discussions on the inclusion of oncology in the CBR's scientific agenda started in 2010 and have immediately gained the sympathy of many members and former presidents. The CBR's current board of directors have endorsed the proposal and established the creation of a commission to deal specifically with this theme.

Such an initiative certainly updates and enriches the scientific contents as well as the education in radiology in Brazil.

1. Member of the CBR Commission on Imaging in Oncology, Director of the Department of Imaging Diagnosis – Hospital A. C. Camargo, São Paulo, SP, Brazil. E-mail: chojniakj@uol.com.br