

EDITORIAL

State of Science Conference in Cancer Care – identification of front line research topics

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This issue of Acta Oncologica includes three review articles [1–3] with commentaries from a recent State of the Science conference organized by the multidisciplinary Swedish Research Network in Cancer Care. This national network was first initiated with support from the Swedish Cancer Nursing Society and has also received funding from the Swedish Cancer Society since 2006. After several decades of research conducted by a wide variety of individuals, cancer care research had become comparably strong in Sweden. Examples of recent articles from this research are [4–23]. There was a general recognition of the need to further develop and consolidate our collective efforts if this research will have greater impact on patients and their families. The network thus came about as an effort by researchers in the field to avoid weaknesses in prioritized research caused by lack of resources, small groups or individual efforts, and a resulting lack of powerful multi-center studies. The main goal of the network is to create a new forum from which it is possible to increase collaboration and consultancy among researchers in this relatively small field in Sweden, foster increased knowledge transfer from research into clinical practice, and improve the robustness and clinical relevance of new research endeavors. Over 80 PhD-prepared researchers in cancer care with professional backgrounds as nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, physicians, dental hygienists, social workers and psychologists/behavioral scientists are now members.

The state of the science conference held in August 2009 was part of the network's efforts to identify front-line issues in areas of relevance for all

disciplines involved in cancer care research. The topics were chosen to strengthen the characteristic patient focus of most cancer care research in Sweden, at the same time as the cutting edge in these fields could be illuminated by international experts. Two main topics were presented for an open audience of approximately 100 people on August 19, 2009: *From information to self-care* was discussed by Professor Michael Brundage, a Canadian oncologist and by Professor Annette Street, an Australian sociologist, while Professor M.A.G. Sprangers, a psychologist from the Netherlands and Professor Ann Langius-Eklöf, Registered Nurse from Sweden, spoke about moving *From quality of life to patient-reported outcomes*. On the following day, two workshops were held for interested members of the Swedish Research Network in Cancer Care, with the aim of synthesizing each topic and discussing its relevance for the Swedish context.

In the following pages, papers by the international key note speakers reflecting the content of their presentations are presented, followed by commentaries based on the workshop discussions.

Declaration of interest: The authors report no conflicts of interest. The authors alone are responsible for the content and writing of the paper.

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