

30 November 2011

A/Professor Chris Milross
Chair, Tripartite Committee
C/- Shane Hayes
Senior Projects Officer
The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists
The Faculty of Radiation Oncology
Level 9, 51 Druitt Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Chris

Re: Tripartite National Strategic Plan for Radiation Oncology

Thank you for your letter requesting COSA's input to the development of a National Strategic Plan for Radiation Oncology.

The Clinical Oncological Society of Australia (COSA) is Australia's peak multidisciplinary society for health professionals working in cancer research, treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care with over 1500 members, 231 of which are members of our Radiation Oncology Professional Group. COSA is recognised as an activist organisation whose views are valued in all aspects of cancer care. We are allied with, and provide high-level clinical advice to Cancer Council Australia.

We are pleased the Tripartite Committee sees COSA as an important contributor to the shaping of the strategic plan. COSA offers the following in response to the issues identified.

1. *Currently what do you see are the greatest issues impacting on patient access to oncology services?*
 - In a wide range of public facilities, access to radiotherapy services remains an issue. Due to the increasing incidence of cancer it remains essential that provisions for increased linear accelerators are factored in to future health care services planning.
2. *In your view, what key factors will impact on oncology treatment and practice over the next 10 years?*
 - Increased incidence and prevalence of cancer requiring greater resources due to increased survival rates and greater emphasis on survivorship and long term toxicity issues
 - Changing workforce with greater numbers opting to work part time
 - Adequate staffing of radiotherapy units, for example physicists and radiotherapists

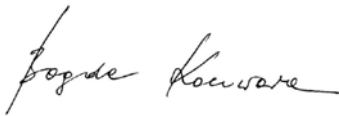
- Adequate staffing in regional and rural centres
- Increasing costs of biological agents
- Increasing costs of new technologies
- Restricted funding for investigators led clinical trials with trials moving off shore to other Asia-Pacific countries
- The deficiency in training of radiation therapists and physicists needs to be improved to meet the current and future demands

3. *Any other comments or observations?*

- COSA supports the development of a national approach to consolidate limited resources
- COSA supports the validation of assessing new radiotherapy technology in terms of clinical benefit
- COSA supports the development of appropriate funding models for new technologies in the delivery of radiotherapy

COSA again thanks the Committee for seeking our input. Please feel free to contact us should you require any further information or clarification.

Yours sincerely



Professor Bogda Koczwara
COSA President



A/Professor Sandro Porceddu
COSA President Elect
Chair COSA Radiation Oncology Group