

Background

Clinical oncology delivers radiation-based therapy and more than 1/3 of cancer patients receive radiotherapy with palliative intent [1].

Palliative radiotherapy planning is an essential skill for clinical oncology trainees [2]. The fundamental principles of radiotherapy are assessed in the UK FRCR Part 1 Examination and registrars who pass the exam can independently plan palliative treatments.

In the North-East London Deanery completion of a palliative radiotherapy workbook is required to demonstrate the required knowledge base and supplement the FRCR Part 1 qualification. However, there is significant variation between hospitals and consequently disparity in clinical proficiency.

Aim: We aimed to create a regional palliative radiotherapy planning passport, representing a structured clinical and training programme for clinical oncology trainees.

Methods

5 palliative radiotherapy planning packages from each hospital within North East London Deanery were collected.

Each palliative pack was reviewed and key themes were identified.

After collating individual work-packages and up-to-date palliative radiotherapy pack was created and subsequently circulated to stakeholders (clinical oncologists, radiographers and physicists). Feedback was collected and implemented to create the final package.

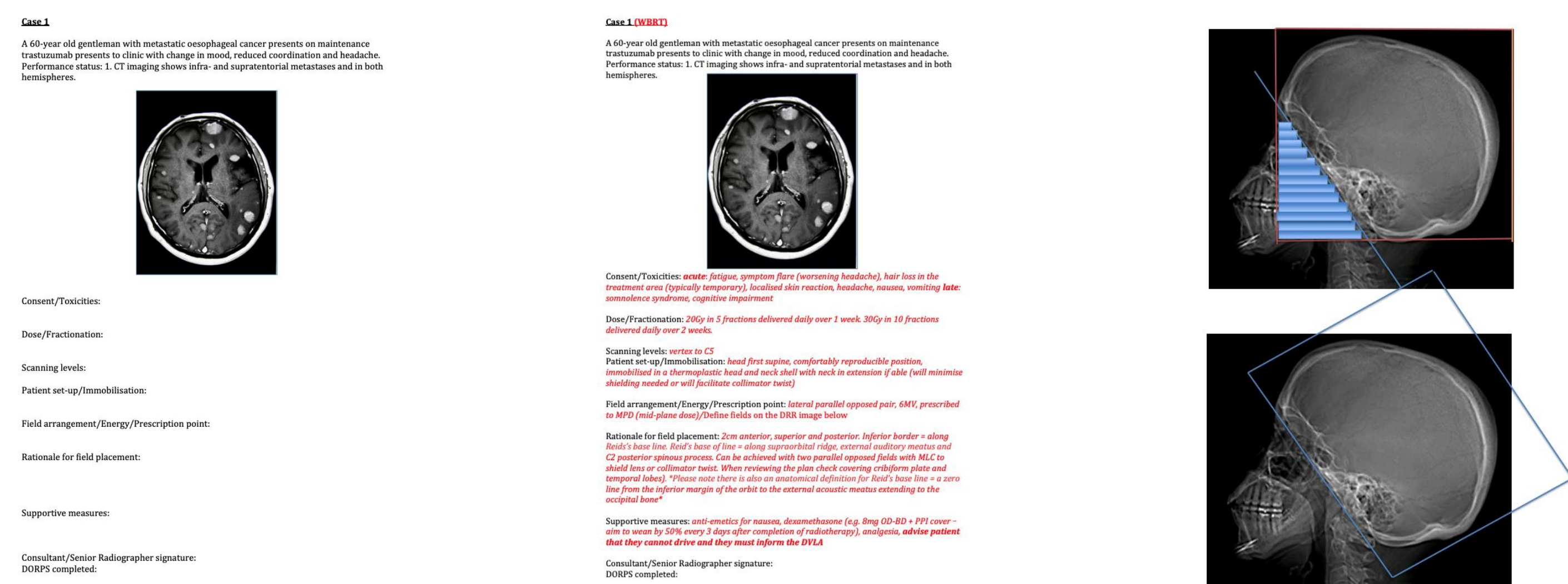


Figure 1. Radiotherapy Palliative Planning Package. a) Case (whole brain radiotherapy) b) Case (whole brain radiotherapy) with answers c) Different field arrangements for the delivery of whole brain radiotherapy

Results

A palliative training pack with 15 cases were created each accompanied by key imaging across a breadth of modalities to evaluate image interpretation as well as key radiotherapy principles.

10 compulsory cases were created with 5 additional cases for further learning and consideration of more complex scenarios.

To ensure standardisation across the deanery a supplementary answer booklet explaining the key concepts and varying dose/fractionations available in accordance with RCR guidelines was provided.

A certificate of completion provides evidence of independent palliative planning competence.

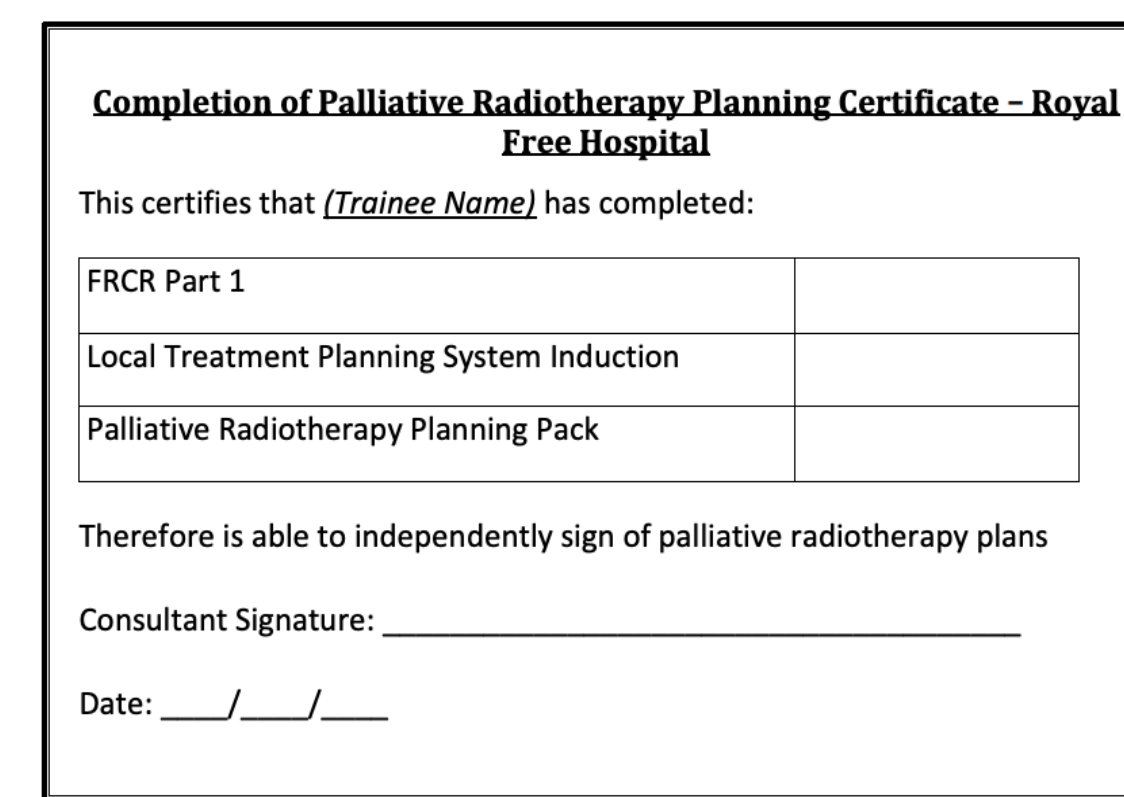


Figure 2. Certificate of Completion Palliative Radiotherapy Planning

In addition to palliative cases a trainee logbook was created to track and facilitate reflection of cases managed and demonstrate breadth of experience. A simple format was created which can be uploaded onto the Clinical Oncology e-portfolio platform 'Kaizen'.

Diagnosis	Indication for RT	Treatment site	Dose/Fractionation	Scanning levels/let up
Comments:				
Diagnosis	Indication for RT	Treatment site	Dose/Fractionation	Scanning levels/let up
Comments:				
Diagnosis	Indication for RT	Treatment site	Dose/Fractionation	Scanning levels/let up
Comments:				

Figure 3. Clinical Oncology Trainee Logbook

We will audit the package by collecting feedback from trainees to monitor progress.

Discussion

The Clinical Oncology Trainee Curriculum update in 2021 was in part driven by the 2017 NHS Five Year Fast Forward Plan.

Within this capabilities in practice (CiPs) have been developed and are expected to be achieved by trainees to demonstrate achievement of both generic and clinical-oncology specific high-level outcomes. This includes delivering holistic care, contributing in the multidisciplinary setting, and understanding the scientific principles that underpin malignancy for the provision of high quality and safe patient-centred care.

Palliative radiotherapy planning is a key aspect of day-to-day clinical oncology workload and specialist training.

The development of an updated and universal palliative radiotherapy work package reflects the advances in delivery of palliative radiotherapy planning and provides a structured educational tool for trainees to achieve essential educational requirements and demonstrate evidence.

The inclusion of both an answer book and logbook will allow supervising clinicians to feel confident in a trainee's understanding whilst simultaneously providing an evidence base for trainees to refer to over the course of their career.

Key Points

- Through employment of an iterative feedback process from key stakeholders, including trainees, we will continue to update the palliative package assessing this against the Royal College of Radiology Clinical Oncology 2021 Curriculum.
- Integration of logbooks will provide a user-friendly method of tracking trainees' progress and represents an additional educational resource through trainees can meet their individual learning needs.
- Through collaborative working we have developed a sustainable educational resource for clinical oncology trainees, which reinforces the key principles of palliative radiotherapy planning and directly impacts on patient care [2].

References:

1. Lo Presti, G., Roncador, M., Biggiogero, M., Soloni, C. & M Franzetti-Pellanda. (2020) Radiation oncologists role, training and perceptions in palliative care: a systematic review. Reports of Practical Oncology and Radiotherapy. 25(6), 939-942. doi: 10.1016/j.rpor.2020.09.007
2. Lam, S., Poon-King, A., Hill, S., Tilsley, O. (2022) Improving Palliative Radiotherapy Training: A Multi-professional Combined Clinical and Training Improvement Project. Clinical Oncology. 34 doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.clon.2022.01.033