

**ESMO TRU Visit
University Medical Center
Groningen (UMCG)
The Netherlands
29 March–1 April, 2010**



Topic: Translational Research illustrated through the following themes: Molecular imaging, Long term toxicity and early (pre)clinical trials, Microenvironment, infiltration and metastasis of tumor cells and several aspects of gynaecological oncology trials

In March, the Translational Research Unit of the University Medical Center Groningen (UMCG), hosted 7 ESMO fellows from European and non-European countries. In addition, UMCG included 6 of its own fellows and this combination turned out to be really productive.

The visit was chaired by Elisabeth G.E. de Vries, MD, PhD, Head of the Department of Medical Oncology at UMCG. During the 3-day program, the group visited the facilities, the Department of Nuclear Medicine, imaging facilities, animal imaging and animal facility, molecular oncology laboratory and various locations at the oncology and pathology laboratories.

The program started with a general introduction with the main aim of teaching young oncologists all about carrying out and enjoying translational research. The young oncologists were also given an explanation about the hurdles and how to tackle them e.g. issues about grant writing. The group also had the opportunity to meet with pre-clinical and clinical staff who motivated them even more about translational research.

Interactive lectures were held daily with discussions as well as visits to the facilities and introduction to techniques. UMCG ensured that the faculty represented different backgrounds and age ranges. In addition, there was a social program which was particularly important and allowed the faculty members to spend more time with individual fellows providing an opportune occasion to further exchange information and experience.

Aida Amelia Karam, Institut Gustave Roussy, France: *“I believe that the UMCG is an ideal center to organize a TRU Visit. One of the most important things that I have learned is the importance to have a good team director with passion in this kind of work, and always open to give real opportunities to all the team members. I perceived that Prof. Elizabeth de Vries is this kind of*

person; this is reflected in the fact that all the staff that received us seems to very realized and fulfilled with their work.”

Navneet Singh, Institute of Medical Education & Research (PGIMER), Chandigarh, India: *“I think the TRU visit is a very good initiative by ESMO that would help clinicians from geographical areas of the world that do not have facilities for advanced cancer research to have an overview of how translational research is conducted. In the future also, the TRU Visits will continue to help in the exchange of vital knowledge related to translational research across different regions of the world – both within and outside Europe.”*

Kamal Veer Singh Saini, Jules Bordet Institute, Belgium: *“Theory and presentations were of good quality. The visit to laboratories were of high impact and the duration maybe could be increased in the future visits.”*

All fellows wish to thank the UMCG team and ESMO for making this TRU visit such a wonderful experience. They have gained not just on a professional front but on the personal level also, making several friends in the process. The design of the program was a perfect blend of learning, interaction and enjoyment.

The ESMO Translational Unit Visit was an excellent chance for fellows to benchmark their positions in translation research, and an opportunity for the host institute to meet gifted, young doctors with an interest for translational research.

Prof. Dr. Elisabeth G.E. de Vries.