

**ESMO TRU Visit**  
**University of Verona, Section of Medical Oncology**  
**Verona, Italy**  
**October 21st -24th, 2013**



*Policlinico G.B Rossi- Verona, Italy*

Prof. Giampaolo Tortora welcomed medical oncologist to the ESMO Translational Research Unit (TRU) Visit on the 21-24 October 2013, at the Section of Medical Oncology, Department of Medicine of the University Hospital of Verona. He had the pleasure in hosting ten young medical oncologists on the visit entitled: “



Found in translation”. The young medical oncologists came from Brazil, Egypt, Georgia, India, Russia and Spain. The programme started with a general introduction by Prof. Tortora with the aim to provide the ESMO visiting Fellows an insight into main fields of Translational Research

in Oncology: what is it, the history, the basics, the challenges and goals, the facilities.

During the **1<sup>st</sup> day** Prof. Bronte showed some important immunological aspects dealing with the various types of immunotherapy, tumor vaccines in addition to some insights about the melanoma treatment with the drugs currently available for such a kind of pathology.

Prof. Scarpa dealt with the cancer heterogeneity, molecular sub-classification, non-invasive diagnosis, patient selection, massive scale sequencing, ICGC (International Cancer Genome Consortium).

During the morning of the **2<sup>nd</sup> day**, the group led by some of our oncologists, Dr. Melisi and Dr. Bria, visited our outpatient cancer clinic, the ward and the Clinical Research Centre, where they received info about our ongoing early phase studies by Dr. Milleri. During the afternoon the fellows followed 2 lectures held by Dr. E. Bria (Translational Research in NSLC and Breast cancer) and Dr. Melisi (Translational Research in upper GI cancer). The remaining time was dedicated to Q&A sessions with Faculty.

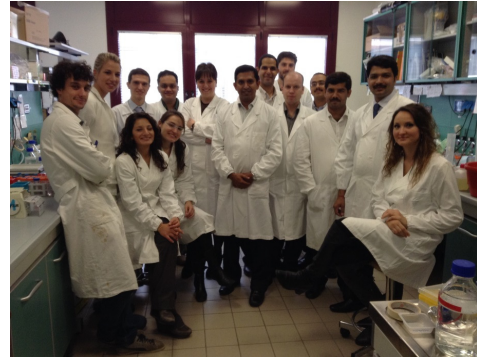


The morning session of the 3<sup>rd</sup> day started with an “Introduction to laboratory” session by Dr. Melisi followed by a visit to our Medical Oncology and Molecular Therapy Laboratories where the ESMO fellows have been acquainted with a brief outline of the research projects performed in our lab.



In particular Dr. Carbone provided a detailed description of the development of a mouse model of resistance to targeted therapy in gastric cancer and the subsequent preliminary results of some experiments performed in that model. The fellows had the opportunity, thanks to Dr. Tamburrino and Dr. Piro, to follow the ongoing routine

activities performed at the time of their visit: analysis of protein expression through SDS-PAGE, cell cultures, colorimetric analysis of dose-response experiments performed *in vitro*, plasma separation and mononuclear cells isolation from human sample.



The activities were performed in smaller groups so that guests could follow the researchers in an interactive manner making observations and asking questions about either the rationale of the experiment or the methodology presented.

The afternoon session dealt with a where Dr. Fassan and Dr. Lawlor and the technical aspects of Biobanking infrastructure and Dr. Lawlor (Biobanking platforms) Diagnostics).



“hands on” molecular pathology Laboratory showed both the infrastructure, the equipment Molecular Pathology and Diagnostics, the processes. Two short lectures were provided by and Dr Normanno (Technologies for Molecular

Below are the testimonials from some of the fellows:

Ahmed Nagy-Egypt: *“I believe the benefits of this visit are: 1.Emphasis on the impact of translational research in cancer management; 2. Direct experience with translational research tools especially laboratories 3.Being introduced to the concept of 'Bio-Banking’”.*

Krishna Mohan Mallavarapu-India: *“TRU Visit offers the rare chance to actually see what we read and practice, visiting best of the centers is the greatest source of inspiration. I was inspired to do a PhD soon!!*

*The visit gave clearer understanding of the concepts of Translational Research, Bio banking and I got a chance to meet the finest faculty and fellow oncologists from across the globe”.*

Bivas Biswas-India: *“It was great pleasure to me (probably us) to have an opportunity to visit your institution as the part of ESMO TRU fellowship. I am fortunate enough to get the fellowship. I had a great time during this visit to observe the whole class Oncology set up with basic and clinical research, patient care and molecular oncology labs. We learned a lot by doing this and got insight regarding our future goals in oncology research and career building. Especially I thanks to you for your supervision, simplicity, humbleness and your knowledge. I also like to thanks to your other faculties (like, Dr Davide Melisi) and your clinical*

*fellows and post-docs in the labs. I must thank ESMO for giving me the opportunity and also look forward to get more opportunity like this in future from ESMO”.*

*Giovanni Bariani- Brazil: “Firstly, the TRU visit is an opportunity to visit a leading cancer center in Europe. It is possible to have a big picture of the current process of research, since laboratory knowledge development to clinical trials. Beyond the infrastructure, the TRU visit offered the possibility to be in contact with an opinion leader in Oncology as it was with Prof. Tortora this year. Also, we had a huge networking with all colleagues worldwide. And there is a unique chance to share information about how cancer is being fought in other centers around the world. The lectures given were engaging and opened our minds to a different way to understand and deal with cancer. I do not want to seem exaggerated praising everything. But in fact, my opinion is that everything was perfect. The TRU visit encouraged me to keep up with cancer centers around the world and even to make a fellow abroad. I will certainly recommend TRU visit to my colleagues”.*

*Dr. Sanudev Sadanandan Vadakke Puthiyottil-India: “The TRU visit helped me to understand the importance of Translational Research in the ever expanding field of Clinical Oncology. I am recommending Translational research programs to all residents as these programs are very much student friendly and provide valuable experience in understanding newer developments in molecular oncology. Since this visit conferred my belief that good research is the backbone of choosing right treatment to right patient-I would like to promote more research in my institution. I would like to mention Prof Tortora in this regard. It was a privilege to be associated with him, a person of such a high academic standing yet a humble, approachable gentleman with his warm and pleasant nature, he took pains to make us feel at home, arranged best faculty to take classes for us; gave us a memorable tour through the city of Verona and a fine closing dinner in one of the best restaurants in city. The postgraduates were also very helpful and friendly.”*

*Dr. Clara Senín Estor-Spain: “The interactivity level with faculty was very intense and ongoing. Every lecture was followed by an interesting debate about our medical practice in our hospital. All the members of the Department were always interested in our professional background as well as in our present and future interests. All the speakers during the visit were well-known in the medical community due to their high standing and numerous publications. For this reason, the lectures were always evidence-based and encouraged us to review the material in greater depth. The facilities of the Department were excellent and suitable for the visit. The computer equipment and software was highly conducive to our effective learning. The physical teaching environment of the rooms was extremely comfortable.*

*Dr. Ilya Pokataev-Russia: “We have no biobank in Russia. Now we think how to start. There are a lot of benefits of having a biobank. My evaluation about the institute and the visit was the best because the institute has all state-of-the-art equipment (microarray, NG sequencing).*

At the end of the day Fellows and Faculty joined for an enjoyable farewell dinner.



**Our dinner in a former 12<sup>th</sup> century church with frescoes**

*Verona by night*

