

Foreword



Axel S Merseburger

Axel Merseburger is professor of urology and chairman of the Department of Urology at University Hospital Schleswig-Holstein, Campus Lübeck, Germany. After graduating from Hannover Medical School in 2002, he carried out a residency in surgery and urology at the Eberhard Karls University in Tübingen, Germany, followed by a research fellowship at the Miller School of Medicine, Miami, USA in 2006. He became associate professor in 2009 and full professor in 2012 at Hannover Medical School. Professor Merseburger is a member of various uro-oncology organisations and serves as an advisor for the European Association of Urology (EAU) Guideline Group for Renal Cancer and was the Chairman of the EAU Guideline Group for Lasers and Technologies. He acts as reviewer and editorial board member for several urology and oncology indexed journals and is associate editor of the World Journal of Urology and editor-in-chief of European Oncology & Haematology. Professor Merseburger's research activity encompasses both molecular and clinical aspects of uro-oncology, with specific interest in biomarkers and prognostic factors for prostate cancer, renal cell carcinoma and transitional cell carcinoma. He has authored and co-authored more than 250 peer-reviewed articles and he is the principal investigator in multiple phase II and III clinical trials.

Welcome to the winter edition of *European Oncology and Haematology*. At the end of another year in which the field of oncology has reported new standards of care and improved outcomes in numerous types of cancer, we feature a range of topical articles covering several therapeutic areas.

This edition begins with a fascinating editorial from Francesca Vinchi on the role of free haem and iron in shaping macrophage plasticity towards a pro-inflammatory phenotype, which may have important therapeutic implications for patients with sickle cell disease. Haematology is also the subject of one of our popular expert interviews: Maria Domenica Cappellini shares her expertise on the diagnosis and treatment of Gaucher disease. In other interviews, Reinhard Dummer discusses the findings of the landmark COLUMBUS clinical trial and their implications for the treatment of *BRAF*-mutant melanoma, Miguel Marcao provides an update on the clinical development of lenvatinib for the treatment of hepatocellular carcinoma and Jason Lester explains the benefits and limitations of proton-beam therapy in the treatment of solid tumours.

Case reports are an important addition to scientific journals as they can raise awareness of rare subtypes of common diseases, as well as side effects of frequently used medications. In this issue, Petricevic et al. present a case of epidermal growth factor receptor (*EGFR*) mutations in a patient with small cell lung cancer, an unusual finding as such mutations are generally associated with non-small cell lung cancers.

Despite advances in the treatment of numerous cancers, the prognosis for patients with metastatic or locally advanced, non-resectable bladder cancer remains poor with platinum-based chemotherapy. Jong and Samoi present a much-needed review of the latest advances in immune checkpoint inhibition and other novel therapeutic options in this patient population. By contrast, the treatment landscape of multiple myeloma has been transformed in recent years thanks to the introduction of novel agents and new combination therapies. Minnema and Gavriatopoulou review the remaining challenges and unmet needs in the treatment of this malignancy, with a focus on tailoring treatment to the individual patient. Finally, Janssens and Wakelin present a mini-review that compares centrifugal and membrane therapeutic plasma exchange and the factors influencing treatment decisions.

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