

Is Europe equipped with enough medical oncologists? Horizon still unknown

January 17 2014

The European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO) has welcomed a recent survey that shows the number of medical oncologists in Western Europe appears to be keeping pace with the rising toll of cancer.

But the society has also warned that a worrying lack of information about the situation in Eastern Europe must be urgently addressed.

Published in the *Annals of Oncology* this week, the survey provides the first detailed information on the current number of medical oncologists in 12 European Union countries, mostly in Western Europe, and their predicted availability by 2020.

Around the world countries are struggling to ensure their medical oncology systems can deal with the increase in [cancer](#) cases, says ESMO Press Officer Solange Peters, a lung cancer expert from the university of Lausanne, Switzerland. Until now, nobody could say what the situation was in Europe.

The survey, led by Evandro de Azambuja from Jules Bordet Institute, Brussels, shows that Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, The Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden and the UK will probably have enough medical oncologists over the next 8 years since data collection to meet the needs of an increasing cancer patient population.

The study provides the current ratio of cancer cases to medical

oncologists for each country, and shows the annual increase in the total number of medical oncologists.

However, despite repeated attempts, researchers were not able to gather adequate information from the 15 other EU Member States, making it impossible to paint a full picture of the situation in Europe.

"ESMO is willing to help countries work together to make this kind of data available for all of Europe," Peters says. "We need a complete picture and the current one is insufficient to draw firm conclusions."

"It is vital that we collect this data and we continuously monitor it, to optimise the [medical oncology](#) system in every European country," says the ESMO spokes.

"In the long term, we hope that it might be possible to build a Europe-wide system that will ensure we have a full picture of the needs across Europe, also beyond 2020, to guarantee optimal care to cancer patients" she says.

More information: E. de Azambuja, L. Ameye, M. Paesmans, C.C. Zielinski, M. Piccart-Gebhart, M. Preusser. The landscape of medical oncology in Europe by 2020. *Ann Oncol* 2014; 25: 525-528
[annonc.oxfordjournals.org/cont ... mdt559.full.pdf+html](http://annonc.oxfordjournals.org/cont...mdt559.full.pdf+html)

Provided by European Society for Medical Oncology

Citation: Is Europe equipped with enough medical oncologists? Horizon still unknown (2014, January 17) retrieved 5 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-01-europe-equipped-medical-oncologists-horizon.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.