

Contact: Beth Bukata
703-839-7332
bethb@astro.org
Nicole Napoli
703-839-7336
nicolen@astro.org

ASTRO's IHE-RO program receives two-year grant

Fairfax, Va., January 27, 2010 – The American Society for Radiation Oncology's Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise – Radiation Oncology (IHE-RO) program has been awarded a \$680,000 Biomedical Research Award from the state of Florida for two years beginning January 1, 2010, to expedite the development of interoperability standards and build test tools software to accomplish interoperability goals in the field of radiation oncology to reduce medical errors.

Grants were given to the top 20 National Institutes of Health (NIH) Challenge Grant applications from Florida that received high scores from NIH but were not chosen to be funded. Challenge Grants are awarded to support research on topic areas that address specific scientific and health research challenges in biomedical and behavioral research that would benefit from significant two-year jumpstart funds.

“There are significant interconnectivity and interoperability issues in radiation oncology, which are basically slowing down the development of comprehensive electronic health records for cancer patients,” Jatinder Palta, Ph.D., principle investigator of the award, co-chair of the IHE-RO committee and professor at the University of Florida College of Medicine, said. “The Florida Biomedical Research Award basically takes the burden off of ASTRO in terms of financially and will expedite the process of interconnectivity. The ultimate goal is that we would have universal health records for cancer patients or we would have radiation oncology equipment communicating with each other.”

The grant will be used to fund the IHE-RO project through the IHE-RO Planning Committee, which has previously been supported by ASTRO, including hiring a computer scientist with expertise in connectivity standards to help develop test tools and help with the IHE-RO Connectathon in promoting interoperability and interconnectivity in the radiation oncology community.

IHE-RO was established in late 2004 as a domain of the larger Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise (IHE) program, a global initiative now in its 11th year that creates the framework for passing vital health

information seamlessly across multiple healthcare enterprises. In addition to radiation oncology, there are operational domains in eye care, cardiology, radiology and patient care devices, among others.

For more information on IHE-RO, visit http://wiki.ihe.net/index.php?title=Radiation_Oncology. For more information on IHE, visit www.ihe.net.

ASTRO is the largest radiation oncology society in the world, with more than 10,000 members who specialize in treating patients with radiation therapies. As the leading organization in radiation oncology, biology and physics, the Society is dedicated to improving patient care through education, clinical practice, advancement of science and advocacy. For more information on radiation therapy, visit www.ranswers.org. To learn more about ASTRO, visit www.astro.org.

###