

situ hybridization (FISH). In addition, a "lite" version of the system is being developed for cancer centres that may not require the full functionality of the existing TELESYNERGY® suite. Professor Hollywood, together with NCI/CIT colleagues, obtained a Health Research Board (HRB) equipment grant for the additional development of a Tele-Archiving and Data-Warehouse linked to the TELESYNERGY® Multimedia Medical Imaging Workstation Network.

The TELESYNERGY® systems in Belfast and Dublin were updated during 2003. A second TELESYNERGY® suite was added at the Trinity College Dublin (TCD) School of Radiation Therapy/Academic Unit of Clinical and Molecular Oncology (AUCMO). The TCD School of Radiation Therapy/AUCMO provided funding and NCI's CIT provided technical support.

The TELESYNERGY® system was endorsed within the *Development of Radiation Oncology Services in Ireland*¹—a report by an Expert Group. The report suggested that TELESYNERGY® and other telemedicine developments would be a core technology in linking a proposed network of Radiation Oncology units within Ireland and beyond. Significant expansion of the TELESYNERGY® network within the Republic of Ireland is expected in late 2004/early 2005.

The TELESYNERGY® system was demonstrated for several dignitaries, including the Prime Ministers

of Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, Australian and Finnish ambassadors, and a member of the Malaysian royalty.

The C3D system, the second/updated version of net-Trials®, was implemented in 2003 and is being examined by members of the HRB-funded clinical trials unit in the South Western Health Authority.

Throughout 2003, Working Group members had several articles published in journals^{2,3} such as *CancerWise*. Some publications are available on the Consortium Web site. In addition to presenting at the Consortium-sponsored All-Ireland Cancer Conference in Cork, members also presented at several national and international meetings, including the annual scientific meeting of the European Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology.

¹ Hollywood, Donal, et al. *The Development of Radiation Oncology Services in Ireland*. October 2003. Department of Health and Children Ireland.

² Johnston, P. G. & Daly, P. A. *NCI-Ireland Consortium: A Unique International Partnership in Cancer Care*. *Oncologist* 6, 453-8 (2001).

³ McAleer, J. J., O'Loan, D. & Hollywood, D. P. *Broadcast Quality Teleconferencing for Oncology*. *Oncologist* 6, 459-62 (2001).

NURSING

Besides the two island of Ireland Chief Nursing Officers Judith Hill and Mary McCarthy, Nursing Working Group members include clinicians, nurse educators, and nurse managers who are all dedicated to furthering issues of interest to

oncology nurses, especially in the area of training. In 2003, the Nursing Working Group welcomed Tony Lenfesty and Anne-Marie Lynch as new members. They bring a palliative care perspective to the work of the Group.

The main focus of the group over the year has been in developing an action plan to implement a strategy for nursing within the Consortium over the next three years.

Overall aims of the strategy are:

1. Workforce development of nurses to participate in the clinical trials programmes
2. Developing and building capacity for cancer and palliative care nursing research and development
3. Identifying educational opportunities across the island of Ireland and in the United States
4. Building networks and databases to enhance communication and information sharing

In June 2003, the Chief Nursing Officers presented a paper on "Developing Strategic Alliances to Improve Cancer Services" at the International Congress of Nursing in Geneva. The paper highlighted alliance building between governments, North/South of the island, East/West across the Atlantic, between clinical practice/education and research, using a multidisciplinary approach and shared leadership. The alliances' benefits to nursing were identified as leadership development, shared understanding, international standards of practice, team building, networking, and partnership development.

Participation in the clinical trials programme continued this year. Mary Doody and Elizabeth Morrin, two nurses from the Republic, completed the programme in the fall of 2003.

Nurses actively supported the All-Ireland Consortium conference in Cork in October 2003—both as participants and presenters.

PREVENTION

The Prevention Working Group's main focus is on primary prevention, screening and early detection, chemoprevention, biomarker research, molecular prevention research, and research on lifestyle factors such as diet and exercise.

Prevention Workshop

The first prevention workshop sponsored by the Prevention Working Group—Smoking Cessation: Current Practice and Future Directions: Developing a Research Agenda—was held May 21-22, 2003 in Dundalk, Ireland.



Dr Shu-Hong Zhu (US), Mr Pat Purvis (NI) and Dr Michael Boland (IR) serve as panelists during the Smoking Cessation Workshop in Dundalk (May 2003)