

Year in Review: Our Working Group Programmes in Practise

SCHOLAR EXCHANGE

Professor Patrick Johnston, Chair

Scholar exchange and training remain a primary focus of the Consortium and are included in the initiatives of every Consortium Working Group.

Accelerated development of highly skilled oncologists, nurses, scientists, and other cancer professionals is essential for world-class cancer research and treatment on the island of Ireland. To this end, the Consortium facilitates entrance for island of Ireland health professionals into formal training programmes that reflect its collaborative nature and demonstrate sustainable career development. Fellowships and shorter-term training opportunities are offered as funding becomes available through the Health Research Board (Ireland) and the Research and Development Office (Northern Ireland). E-learning opportunities are also being explored as more easily accessible alternatives for advanced education.

CANCER REGISTRIES/ EPIDEMIOLOGY

Dr Harry Comber, Chair

The Cancer Registries Working Group's long-term goals are consolidation of data from the Northern Ireland Cancer Registry and the National Cancer Registry of Ireland; and development of joint programmes to help researchers better understand cancer rates, trends, and outcomes on the entire island of Ireland. The three-member Working Group meets through regular teleconferences and occasional face-to-

face encounters. The Directors of the two island of Ireland registries also meet regularly.

All-Ireland Cancer Statistics Second Report 1998-2000

The All-Ireland Cancer Statistics Second Report 1998-2000, co-authored by Mr Joe Campo (U.S. Washington State Cancer Registry), Dr Anna Gavin (Northern Ireland Cancer Registry) and Dr Harry Comber (National Cancer Registry of Ireland), was launched at Queen's University Belfast in September. The Chief Medical Officers for Ireland and Northern Ireland and the Vice-Chancellor of Queen's University attended the launch.

Joint North-South Projects

A joint North-South registries research meeting was held in October.

Ongoing joint projects include:

- **A cross-border collaborative study of Barrett's oesophagus and oesophageal adenocarcinoma (FINBAR Study-Factors Influencing Barrett's Adenocarcinoma Relationships).** Recruitment for this study ceased at the end of 2004, on target, with approximately 750 cases and controls. Based on analysis of this epidemiological data, Research Fellow Ms Lesley Anderson was awarded a PhD from Queen's University Belfast. A North-South steering group will administer use of the biological samples.
- **Influence of mammographic screening on breast-conserving surgery in Ireland.** *The European*