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# AIOM chooses *ESMO Open—Cancer Horizons* as its official journal: a warm welcome from *ESMO Open*

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*ESMO Open—Cancer Horizons* has experienced remarkable success since its first issue in January 2016. To date, we have published 41 articles and have now applied for indexing in PubMed Central. Coupled with the unrestricted open access policy, this will increase the visibility of all our published articles and is consequently an important step in the growth of the journal. To add to this rapid evolution, we are happy to announce another significant development: the Italian Association of Medical Oncology (AIOM) has chosen *ESMO Open—Cancer Horizons* as their official journal.

The AIOM is an impressive scientific society, hosting all those working in the field of oncology in Italy. It brings together more than 2500 medical oncologists and is coordinated by an Executive Council of 13 members. Forty-three years have passed since a group of pioneering oncologists founded the AIOM at the National Cancer Institute in Milan. These renowned scientists included Gianni Bonadonna and Umberto Veronesi, and future AIOM Presidents Mario De Lena, Emilio Bajetta and Silvio Monfardini. It is difficult to know whether, at that time, despite their great enthusiasm, they could foresee that the AIOM and, more generally, medical oncology, would grow so much in Italy.

Since the establishment of the AIOM in 1973, the scientific and institutional influence of the society has increased: the Association is now able to produce instruments and documents that can be used for an effective dialogue both at the national—in particular with the Ministry of Health and the Italian Medicines Agency (AIFA)—as well as regional level, where engagement is even more intense. The AIOM is strongly committed to producing scientific and educational material, offering epidemiological,<sup>1</sup> organisational<sup>2</sup> and pertinence instruments<sup>3</sup> that are essential for creating and shaping health policy.

As shown in *Il Libro Bianco dell'oncologia* (a publication listing the available oncology

services in Italy),<sup>2</sup> there are 319 operative Oncology Units in Italy. In partnership with the Italian Society of Anatomic Pathology and Diagnostic Cytopathology (SIAPEC-IAP), the AIOM started a project of biomolecular characterisation of solid tumours in order to guarantee equal access to validated molecular tests for all patients by means of a Quality Control programme, and recommendations on indications and methods of tests.<sup>4</sup> Another particularly noteworthy project is the 'HuCare2' project, devoted to improving psychosocial interventions within Italian oncology units, with a clear impact on quality of life for patients. Last year, the AIOM also founded the Federation of Italian Cooperative Oncology Groups, which brought together 15 different cooperative groups as a point of reference for all those involved in independent clinical research in Italy. As outlined in the 2015 edition of *I numeri del cancro in Italia* (which reports the incidence of cancer in Italy),<sup>1</sup> the number of men diagnosed with cancer has decreased in Italy for the first time, with 194 400 new diagnoses estimated in 2015 (compared to 196 100 in 2014 and 199 500 in 2013). This consistently decreasing trend is in no small part due to the efficacy of prevention campaigns, which the AIOM designs and promotes at various levels.

Over the years, the AIOM has invested a large amount of effort into awareness campaigns directed at the Italian population. From the first educational tour on prostate cancer in centres for senior citizens, to the 6th edition of *Non fare autogol* (*Don't score an own goal*), which sees medical oncologists in collaboration with the Italian Premier National football league ('Serie A') going to high schools to teach and discuss cancer prevention with students. They also created the first national campaign aimed at preventing young people trying their first cigarette and a project to promote anti-HPV vaccination as a tool of primary prevention.

The AIOM recently launched a plea to institutions to support a National Cancer

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Fund to finance novel and costly oncology treatments with an increment in tobacco tax of one cent per cigarette. The proposed aim of the National Cancer Fund would be as an instrument of social equity to safeguard the equal right of treatment and access to innovative drugs irrespective of the region of Italy involved, with pharmaceutical cost management based on participation and sharing by all stakeholders. This proposal received universal approval, from AIFA, healthcare providers, healthcare institutions, patients and citizen representatives.

The AIOM has a long history of collaborations with other national and international scientific societies. The association with *ESMO Open* represents a great opportunity for the AIOM, and seals a relationship that will act as a springboard for continued progress and development of the Society. It will provide a channel for AIOM members to share opinions and compare different oncology strategies through direct access to a European oncology journal publishing innovative clinical and basic research, along with educational articles and information on ESMO policies.

We hope that this opens the door for future collaborations between a national scientific society, such as the AIOM, and ESMO. Working as part of *ESMO Open*, the AIOM will be able to increase its visibility and to

disseminate information on important projects conducted within the Society to a wider audience.

Please join us in wishing the AIOM and *ESMO Open—Cancer Horizons* continued success. We look forward to reading about the advances in the field of oncology coming from AIOM members and from Italy, which will contribute to the journal's aim of improving the quality of all aspects of cancer care worldwide.

**Competing interests** None declared.

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