





<p>Cornelis Van Tilburg – Germany</p> <p>Innovative Therapies for Children with Cancer</p>  <p>Supported by ITCC</p>		<p>National Centre for Tumour Diseases NCT- Trial Centre</p> <p>Paediatric Oncology</p> <p>Heidelberg Germany</p>
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Flims 17: Brainwashing Paediatric Oncologists

As a paediatric oncologist involved in clinical trial development, I had great expectations in advance of this workshop, which was supported from ITCC. Aim of the workshop was to write a clinical trial protocol. In the last weeks before the workshop, communications slightly changed, replacing “Workshop” by “Quarantine Week” and even worse “a week of exquisite torture” was used in the last email! Although I must admit that these statements proved to be true, I highly appreciated the workshop and its format.

The workshop provides excellent daily plenary lectures by world leading experts covering all topics of clinical trials. Of course, paediatric oncology being only a minority in this field, the lectures were addressing clinical trials in adults most of the time. However, I found it very valuable to be among medical oncologist and to learn from their perspectives. Next to these lectures, small discussion groups addressing specific problems were offered. It was also possible to sign up for a “meet the expert” session for individual discussions.

However, the real hard work to design and write a clinical trial protocol was done in the protocol development groups. In these groups of ± 8 students, protocols were discussed and adjusted under supervision of two oncologists and a statistician. I found this format extremely efficient and inspiring. It has to be stated that it is really luxurious to have a top class statistician and two experienced oncologist by hand all the time for all problems and questions. Paediatric oncologists were assigned to one group where specific paediatric expertise was guaranteed by the presence of a very experienced ITCC paediatric oncologist. After long discussions and sometimes several individual sessions, protocols were written during the evening (and night). After a week in “quarantine” I felt somewhat brainwashed but I really took an ethical review board ready protocol back home!

I would really encourage every paediatric oncologist with interest in clinical trials to participate in a next Flims workshop.

Cornelis van Tilburg, 08 July 2015