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Abstract Text
The COVID-19 pandemic has imposed changes in radiotherapy (RT) departments worldwide. Medical physicists (MPs) are key healthcare professionals in maintaining safe and effective RT. This study reports the results of a survey on changes in departmental and clinical practice and on the impact for the future, which was sent to the global MP community. The impact of COVID-19 was bigger in countries with high daily infection rate. The majority of MPs worked in alternation home/on-site. Among practice changes, implementation and/or increased use of hypofractionation was the most common. Some respondents reduced patient-specific quality assurance (QA), reduced machine QA, or moved machine QA to weekends/evenings. Changes such as home-working and increased use of hypofractionation were welcomed. Yet some MPs were concerned about pressure to keep negative changes (e.g. weekend work). COVID-19 affected MPs through changes in practice and QA procedures but also in terms of trust in leadership and team unity. Some changes were welcomed but others caused concern for the future. This data forms the basis, from a medical physics perspective, for the evaluation of long-lasting changes within a multi-disciplinary setting.

SP-0691 Managing medical physics services COVID-19 in a regional hospital
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Nicaragua

Abstract not available

SP-0692 Managing medical physics services COVID-19 in a large academic department
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Abstract Text
Background
Italy has been the first western-world country massively hit by COVID-19. The initial outbreak mainly involved Italian northern area. Our Hospital is the main Brescia hospital. The province infections cumulative incidence as of 15 May 2021 was 8,3% with 104406 infected person. (www.protezionecivile.gov.it
; https://opendatadpc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/b0c68bce2cce47ce47beacc57ef4b4e1)
The initial measures to hinder the dissemination of the virus were considerably curbed by the complexity of its detection, as the clinical presentation of Covid-19 is heterogeneous and a large proportion of the patient is asymptomatic. The scenario is even more intricate in cancer patients, as manifestations of the tumor and side effects of the treatment might mimic COVID-19 (Buglione M, Spiazzi L et al : Two months of radiation oncology in the heart of Italian “red zone” during COVID-19 pandemic: paving a safe path over thin ice. Radiat Oncol. 2020 Aug 10;15(1):191)
Our Medical Physics Department is involved in all the radiological activities of our Hospital as well as in the field of Worker Radioprotection. The Medical Physics staff is also dedicated to teaching and internship for Brescia University, that has a Medical School with Specialization in all radiological area and a degree course for RT.

Action taken
To reduce the risk of infection for workers and patients the Hospital did introduced some rules, e.g. temporary suspension of the canteen service, remotized reunions with the ones that could not be avoided allowed with a reduced number of people. University suspended all unnecessary internship and all lessons were remotized. Staff and patients had to always wear mask within hospital premises and were invited to clean frequently the hands.
The Medical Physics department took some action partly derived from EFOMP (European Federation of Organisations for Medical Physics) (https://www.efomp.org/index.php?r=news/view&Id=151) and AIFM (Associazione Italiana di Fisica Medica e Sanitaria) (https://www.fisicamedica.it/wp-content/uploads/Documenti/AIFM/policy/Posizione%20AIFM%20COVID-19_0.pdf) indications.
The aim was to reduce the risk of infection transmission by avoiding unnecessary contact and proximity between workers and patients. To obtain this goal we acted both on spatial and temporal separation.
With specific regard to Radiation Oncology related activities we changed TPS and QC Workstations positions to have room dedicated to Physicist and Dosimetrist separate from ones for Radiation Oncologists. A room was dedicated to planning discussion and approval. 2 VPN connections allowed 2 physicists to do remote planning.
Linacs were dedicated to treat patients with Covid (or suspected Covid infections) at the end of the working hours, therefore QA were shifted to mornings and Saturdays.

Discussion
The actions were effective in reducing the risk of spreading the infection: none of the medical physics department staff was infected with SARS cov 2.
The increased knowledge of the infection transmission pathways and staff vaccination during the first months of 2021 allowed to reduce the implemented measures, mainly the ones that reduced the sociality, an essential part of workers wellbeing and group relations.

OC-0693 Virtual VMAT QA prospective validation: towards measurement-free patient-specific quality assurance
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Purpose or Objective
