

## ESO-EONS Clinical Fellowship for Cancer Nurses 2024

### Champalimaud Clinical Center Fellowship

#### Nikolas Politis

The Champalimaud Clinical Center (CCC) is a world famous modern scientific, medical and technological institution providing specialized clinical treatment for oncology. It is located in Belém, next to the mouth of the Tagus, the departure point of the great Portuguese navigators. The architect Charles Correa believed that buildings should seek to express the true essence and culture of the places where they are located, always keeping in mind the ultimate purpose of the building to create the perfect symbiosis between function and form: "Architecture as sculpture. Architecture as beauty. Beauty as therapy..."<sup>1</sup>

The Center develops advanced programs for research of diseases. The CCC focuses on personalized medicine and tries to customize the therapies in order to achieve more effectiveness in controlling and treating the diseases, leading to better quality of life.



My name is Nikolas Politis and I am an oncology nurse from the University Hospital of Heraklion, Crete, Greece. I've been working in the field of oncology for eight years. I am a member of EONS Early Career Nurses Working Group (ECN WG). From 1-26 April 2024, I participated in the Fellowship Programme organized by the European School of Oncology (ESO) and the European Oncology Nursing Society (EONS) at the Champalimaud Clinical Center in Lisbon, Portugal.

1. <https://www.diarioimobiliario.pt/Arquitectura/O-Centro-Champalimaud-como-nunca-ou-viu>

The Fellowship Programme offered me the opportunity to spend four weeks in a clinical environment specifically designed to increase knowledge and improve professional development and gave me the opportunity to work in multi-professional teams centered on the patient. These include, among others, medical oncologists, surgeons, radiotherapists, radiologists, pathologists, geneticists, nuclear medicine specialists, nurses, psycho-oncologists, nutritionists, physiotherapists, and palliative care experts, who meet regularly to define personalized diagnostic and treatment plans adjusted to each individual patient.

Participating in this Fellowship Programme was an excellent opportunity to enhance my knowledge, validate the chemotherapy-immunotherapy protocols, improve the way I provide oncology nursing care, and learn how to translate my vision into everyday practice in my working environment.

Talking about working environment, in Champalimaud Clinical Center there is an indoor tropical garden, which is the most remarkable area of the main building. This garden is a space of restricted public access, making it possible, given the right conditions, for anyone to enjoy the exuberant vegetation and the peacefulness of a space designed for all. "The purpose of this is to use nature as therapy, the water around us, the sky above and the healing presence of rain forests. All these are therapies for the patients"<sup>2</sup>.



The level of organization of automated electronic processes and integration of technology into daily practice is impressive. The Champalimaud Clinical Center emphasizes both the continuing training of staff members and strict procedures regarding patient information aimed at their well-being.

2. <https://www.dezeen.com/2011/06/14/champalimaud-centre-for-the-unknown-by-charles-correa-associates/>



Cancer nurses need continuing education in order to cope with the varied and complex needs of cancer patients and their families. It is our obligation to look for that motivation to make us to improve our care of cancer patients.

My mentor during the Fellowship Programme was Christina Pereira (1), nurse of the Oncology Day Hospital. She, as well as the supervisor of the Oncology Day Hospital, Fernanda Relveiro (2), helped me to fulfil my wishes and enabled me to attend the departments I had expressed interest in.



Photo 1



Photo 2

In the Oncology Day Hospital, where I spent most of my time, I had the pleasure of working with professional nurses who welcomed me and provided me with informational materials, oncology practice guides and the latest treatment protocols. I visited and interacted with colleagues from the Breast Unit, the Lung Unit, the Urology Unit, the Dermatology Unit, the Digestive Unit, the Botton-Champalimaud Pancreatic Cancer Centre, the Surgical Centre, the In-Patient Facility Centre, the Intensive Care and Recovery Area, the Call Centre Nursing Team, the Pharmacy and the Extramural Care Service Team.

I am very grateful to the Champalimaud Clinical Center and the Head Nurses, Helena Lagartinho, Rosa Sousa, Fernanda Conceicao and Emilia Rito for their support, collaboration and for allowing me to participate in their multidisciplinary units.

I want to thank ESO-EONS for giving me the opportunity to have this unique and wonderful experience.



**Obrigado!**