

A key element of the centralised procedure is the 210-day limit for evaluation of applications. "Despite start-up difficulties, the opinions have been given broadly within this time frame, or even less," said the EMEA

status report in November 1996. The times are displayed in Table 1. The "clock-stop time" is the time when evaluation stops because the manufacturers have been asked to provide more information.

Current work load estimates for this year show that over 45 new applications in the centralised procedure are expected for human and veterinary medicines.

EORTC Fellow Profiles: Dr Susan Keating, MD

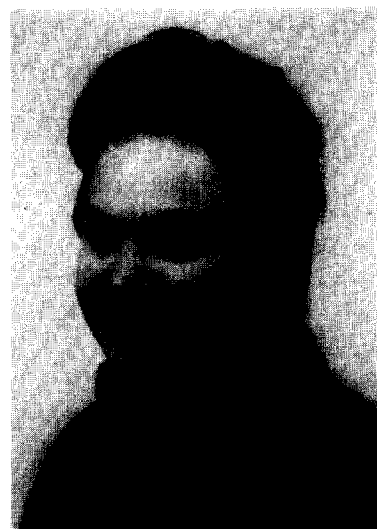
Dr Susan Keating, MD, is the first Medical Research Fellow of the Leukaemia Cooperative Group. She is attached to the EORTC Leukaemia Unit at the Data Centre in Brussels.

"I do various types of analysis in acute myeloid leukaemia trials using the existing data base of the Data Centre. I look at selection procedures for bone marrow transplants. The objective is to write a PhD thesis in Nijmegen University after 4 years of research on that subject," said Dr Keating.

She enjoys being part of the team producing clinical trials. "In the field of haematology, clinical trials are very important because we have not yet established what the best treatment for leukaemia patients is." She is grateful for the opportunities to attend major conferences and meet experts in haematology, the speciality that she intends to make her career in.

The EORTC have helped her formulate a job that gives her a balanced experience. "Unfortunately, I am out of patient contact because I am purely looking at the data that is sent to the centre, although I have a lot of contact with the doctors in charge of the patients. However, for one month every year I do go to a hospital involved in the research to work in the department, so I have full-time patient contact there. The experience I get there helps me to have a clearer picture of what is going on when I am working with the data."

At the beginning of 1999 Dr Keating will finish at the EORTC and will start her speciality training in internal medicine at St Radboud, the University Hospital in Nijmegen. This will consist of 6 years of training, after which she can specialise in haematology and pursue her practice and research in the field of haematological malignancies.



Dr Susan Keating
First Medical Research Fellow of the Leukaemia Cooperative Group, attached to the EORTC Leukaemia Unit at the Data Centre.

From The Countries

FRANCE

Childhood Leukaemia and Radiation

French researchers have found convincing evidence for environmental radiation exposure, through recreation on beaches, causing childhood leukaemia in an area within 35 km radius of La Hague [1]. La Hague is one of the three nuclear reprocessing plants operating in the world on an industrial scale, the other two being in the U.K.

Dr Dominique Pobel and Dr Jean-Francois Viel of the Faculty of Medicine, Department of Public Health Biostatistics and Epidemiology Unit,

Besançon, France, studied 27 cases of leukaemia diagnosed during the period 1978–1993 in under 25 year-olds and compared them with 192 matched controls.

The researchers write: "Increased trends were found for use of local beaches by mothers and children; the relative risk was 2.87 and 4.49 when categories were aggregated in two levels (more or less than once a month). Consumption of local fish and shellfish also showed an increased trend (relative risk 2.66) when

categories were grouped at two levels (more or less than once a week). A relative risk of 1.18 a year was observed for length of residence in a granite-built house or in a granite area."

1. Pobel D, Viel J-F. Case-control study of leukaemia among young people near La Hague nuclear reprocessing plant: the environmental hypothesis revisited. *Br Med J* 1997, **314**, 101–106.