



EUnetCCC symposium Innovating Cancer Care Through De-escalation Studies

5 - 6 March 2026
Netherlands Cancer Institute, Amsterdam

Organised by joint action **European Networks of Comprehensive Cancer Centres (EUnetCCC)**
and European Academy of Cancer Sciences

Netherlands Cancer Institute, Amsterdam, 5 – 6 March, 2026

5th March 2026

11.30 – 12.30 **Registration, sandwich lunch**

12:30-12:40 Welcome / organiser 10 min

12:40-14:15 Session 1: Why De-escalation Now?

Chair: Gabe Sonke (NKI, Netherlands)

12.40 – 13.15 Keynote: The current paradigms in cancer de-escalation trials 30 min + 5 min discussion. Speaker: Gabe Sonke

13.15 – 13.45 How to tell patients that less can be more in cancer care? 25 min + 5 min discussion. Speaker: Cindy Körner (German Cancer Research Center, Heidelberg, Germany)

13.45 – 14.15 Biomarkers enabling treatment reduction, 25 min + 5 min discussion. Speaker: Bjørn Naume (Oslo CCC, Norway)

14:15-14:45 **Break / coffee**

14:45-16:15 Session 2: Regulations, Resources and Return on Investment in De-escalation trials

Chair: Nancy Abou-Zeid (Fondation ARC, France)

14.45 – 15.15 Regulatory perspectives 25 min + discussion. Speaker: Dario Trapan (Milan, Italy)

15.15 – 15.45 Insurance company perspective 25 min + discussion. Speaker: Sahar van Waalwijk (Leiden, Netherlands)

15.45 – 16.15 How to convince stakeholders of the economic benefits of de-escalation? 25 min + discussion. Speaker: Valesca Retel (NKI, Netherlands)

16:15-16:30 Break/coffee

16:30-17:30 Session 3: Panel discussion

Identifying who would benefit from de-escalation

Chair: Anton Berns (NKI, Netherlands)

- Ethical considerations, speaker Cecilia Bartholdson (KI, Sweden), 5 min
- Patient representative, speaker Tiina Hervonen (Finland), 5 min
- Biomarker-driven selection, speaker Bjørn Naume (Oslo CCC, Norway), 5 min
- De-escalation in the elderly, speaker Pierre Soubeyran (Bergonie Institute, Bordeaux, France), 5 min
- Suggestion: Norbert Couespel, European Cancer Organisation
- Pharma viewpoint, speaker Serban Gheorghiu (AstraZeneca), 5 min
- Discussion 20 minutes

18:00 Networking Reception and Poster Presentations at NKI

6th March 2026

8.30-10.30 Session 4: Case studies in de-escalation

Chair: Helena Earl (Cambridge, UK)

8.30 – 9.00 Breast cancer Helena Earl, 25 min + discussion.

9.00 – 9.30 Lung cancer: Benjamin Besse (Gustave Roussy, France) 25 min + discussion.

9.30 – 10.00 Prostate cancer (active surveillance and focal therapies) Constantinos Zamboglou, (Limassol, Cyprus) 25 min + discussion

10.00 – 10.30 Colorectal cancer: 25 min + discussion. Speaker: Audrius Dulskas (Vilnius, Lithuania)

10.30-11:00 Break/coffee

11:00-12:30 Session 5: Modality-focused innovations

Chair: Christian Blank (NKI, Netherlands)

11:00-11:30 Radiotherapy: From standard fractions to hypofractionation and omission, 25 min + 5 min discussion Speaker: Mechthild Krause (Dresden, Germany)

11:30-12:00 Immunotherapy, Can we stop early? Lessons from melanoma checkpoint inhibitor trials. 25 min + 5 min discussion. Speaker: Christian Blank

12:00-12:300 Surgery (e.g. from Halsted mastectomy to the omission of sentinel node biopsy) 25 min + 5 min discussion. Speaker: Jana de Boniface (Karolinska Institute, Sweden)

12:30-13:30 Session 6: Panel discussion 2 - How to realize de-escalation trials?

Chair: Edita Baltruškevičienė (Vilnius, Lithuania)

- Panel members:
 - Gabe Sonke, NKI, 5 min
 - Caroline Voltz, Scientific lead in oncology and haematology at EMA, 5 min.
 - Nancy Abou-Zeid, ARC France, 5 min.
 - Patient representative Cindy Körner, 5 min.
 - Denis Lacombe, CEO of EORTC, 5 min
 - Dario Trapani, European Institute of Oncology; Common Sense Oncology movement, 5 min.
- Discussion 30 minutes

13:30 Wrap-up: Peeter Karihtala

- Benefits, challenges, and how to move forward?

Networking lunch