

ACADEMIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS AND UPDATES FROM DR. W. P. ANDREW LEE

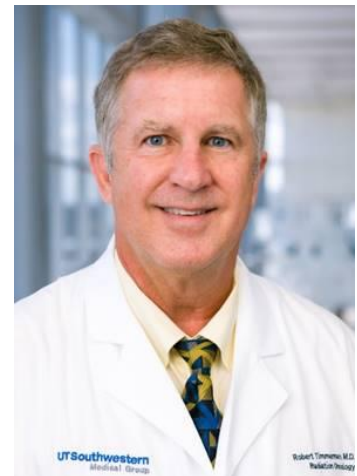
March 18, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

I am delighted to announce the appointment of **Robert D. Timmerman, M.D.**, as the new Chair of the Department of Radiation Oncology effective March 21. He holds the Effie Marie Cain Distinguished Chair in Cancer Therapy Research.

Dr. Timmerman joined UT Southwestern in 2004 as Professor and Vice Chair for Clinical Affairs in the Department of Radiation Oncology, and Director of the Annette Simmons Stereotactic Treatment Center. He also served as Director of Clinical Research and Compliance Officer of the Department. He has been Clinical Director of Radiation Oncology since 2014 and has been serving as Interim Chair for the last six months.

He graduated from Iowa State University with a bachelor's degree in nuclear engineering and from the University of Tennessee with a master's degree in reactor physics. After finishing medical school at the University of South Dakota, he completed a residency in Radiation Oncology at The Johns Hopkins Hospital.



An expert in diseases of the central nervous system, including cancer of the brain and spine as well as lung cancer, Dr. Timmerman has championed the use of precise, noninvasive radiosurgical tools that employ multiple angles to deliver radiation. This approach reduces the levels of toxicity, allowing patients to tolerate the treatment better with fewer side effects.

As a researcher, Dr. Timmerman was intrigued by the idea of applying multidirectional, precise treatments to other areas of the body where natural motion, such as breathing, challenged precision. Working with other researchers, he developed a method – known as stereotactic ablative radiotherapy (SABR) or stereotactic body radiation therapy (SBRT) – that uses sophisticated image guidance and tracking to safely deliver radiation. This seminal contribution is widely regarded to have transformed the field of radiation oncology.

As an example, he led several clinical trials that demonstrated inoperable lung cancer patients treated with SABR could have considerably higher tumor control than with conventional radiation while still mostly avoiding toxicity. This treatment method has now become the new standard of care for older cancer patients.

Dr. Timmerman is currently the Principal Investigator of multiple clinical trials funded by various sources – including the NIH, UT Southwestern, professional organizations, and industry – looking to improve the treatment of brain tumors, lung cancer, and prostate cancer. Importantly, his team has been instrumental in finding new indications for radiotherapy, especially the treatment of patients with metastatic disease.

A dedicated educator, Dr. Timmerman has mentored the training of hundreds of medical students and resident physicians in radiation oncology. For more than 15 years, he has directed quarterly courses in stereotactic

radiotherapy, training nearly 1,000 physicians, physicists, and therapists from Texas, the United States, and around the world.

He is a Fellow of both the American Society for Radiation Oncology and the American College of Radiology. In 2019, Dr. Timmerman received the Patricia and William L. Watson Jr., M.D. Award for Excellence in Clinical Medicine.

I would like to express my deep appreciation to Dr. Neil Rofsky for his service as Chair of the Search Committee, and to all the Search Committee members – Dr. Carlos Arteaga, Dr. Quinn Capers IV, Dr. Suzanne Conzen, Dr. Ralph DeBerardinis, Dr. David Gerber, Dr. Anke Henning, Dr. Jayanthi Lea, Dr. Ganesh Raj, Dr. Baran Sumer, and Dr. Eric Peterson – for the dedication and insights they brought to this comprehensive national search.

Dr. Timmerman’s clinical expertise and research interests, as well as his leadership experience, will further elevate UT Southwestern Medical Center as a national hub for innovation and personalized care in cancer treatment.

Please join me in congratulating Dr. Timmerman.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andy". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

W. P. Andrew Lee, M.D.

Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
Dean, UT Southwestern Medical School