Since 1973 the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists has regularly convened Study Groups to address important growth areas within obstetrics and gynaecology. An international group of eminent clinicians and scientists from various disciplines is invited to present the results of recent research and to take part in in-depth discussions. The resulting volume, containing enhanced versions of the papers presented, is published within a few months of the meeting and provides a summary of the subject that is both authoritative and up to date.

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Gynaecological cancers: biology and therapeutics

Edited by

Sean Kehoe, Richard J Edmondson, Martin Gore and Iain A McNeish
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All contributors to the Study Group were invited to make a specific Declaration of Interest in relation to the subject of the Study Group. This was undertaken and all contributors complied with this request.

Robert Bast is a member of the Scientific Advisory Boards for Fujirubio Diagnostic, Inc., Vermillion, Illumina, Ovary Cancer Action and Ovarian Cancer National Alliance. He receives royalties for CA125 from Fujirubio Diagnostics, Inc. James Brenton was previously the vice-chair of the Cancer Research UK Biomarkers and Imaging Discovery and Development (BIDD) Committee, and a member of the Target Ovarian Cancer Pathfinder Study Advisory Panel. Robert Brown's department receives financial support from AstraZeneca. Andrew Clamp is a member of the Advisory Board for PharmaMar on trabectedin and a member of the NCRI Gynaecological Cancers Clinical Studies Group. Nandita deSouza is a consultant to the NCRI Gynaecological Clinical Studies Group. Martin Gore is a member of the Advisory Boards for AstraZeneca and GlaxoSmithKline, and is a principal investigator for Ovarian Cancer Action. Sean Kehoe is a senior medical adviser to Ovacome and is president of the British Gynaecological Cancer Society. Glenn McCluggage is a member of the Ovacome Medical Advisory Board. Gordon Rustin is a member of the Advisory Boards for Oxygene and Roche. Evis Sala is a member of the NCRI Gynaecological Oncology Clinical Studies Group.
The 60th RCOG Study Group focused on gynaecological cancers, a spectrum of cancers affecting over 16,000 women each year in the UK alone. There is a lack of real understanding of these conditions compared with other malignancies, possibly owing to their relative rarity when viewed as individual diseases, which can influence the desire to invest in research.

The objective of the Study Group was to try to examine as many biological aspects of these cancers as possible, including therapies, both surgical and non-surgical. A wide remit, without doubt, and inevitably not all aspects could be covered in the desired detail.

While a great deal of research is still needed, it is also clear that progress in therapy is occurring, with new agents such as PARP inhibitors targeting specific defects found only in the cancer cell. This is an approach that is opening a new route to therapy besides the normal direct approach to cell destruction. The knowledge that some pathologies previously considered as a primary ovarian disease are in fact of primary fallopian tube origin may not immediately have an effect on patient care but does have implications for research and clinical trials that will ultimately result in better directed therapies.

Advances in multimodal therapies, imaging and targeted and individualised treatments, as well as the role of surgical approaches, are all also covered in this book.

Experts from the UK and abroad have dedicated their time to discuss the varied aspects of these malignancies and I am grateful to all involved.

Sean Kehoe  
Convenor of Study Groups