

Varian Award 2025

Professor Georgia Halkett

ASMIRT is proud to announce Professor Georgia Halkett as the Varian Award recipient for 2025, for her significant contributions to the radiation therapy profession. One of a select group of radiation therapists to hold a PhD internationally, she actively leads a large research program and has progressed to professor in a research-intensive role.

The Varian Award is a prestigious award presented annually to a practising radiation therapist in Australia. It recognises sustained excellence and outstanding contributions to the profession.

Prof Halkett, who is based at Curtin University in Western Australia, has secured more than \$6 million in competitive funding as Principal Investigator and contributed to grants exceeding \$12 million as Chief Investigator, including NHMRC, Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF), National Breast Cancer Foundation, Cancer Council WA and Cancer Australia funding. She has led international research funded by the European Organisation of Research and Treatment of Cancer.

Professor Halkett is an ASMIRT Fellow and a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. This strong grounding in professional and corporate governance has greatly supported her thoughtful and effective leadership. It has enabled her to make a valued contribution through her service as a Director of ASMIRT from 2017 to 2024, and continues to inform her ongoing roles as a Director of the Cooperative Trials Group for Neuro-Oncology (COGNO) and the Trans-Tasman Radiation Oncology Group (TROG).

In a recent conversation with Professor Halkett, ASMIRT discussed what her research leadership vision consists of, what types of research she is involved in and the subsequent research impact.

She explained that there are three key goals that underpin her leadership vision:

1. Improving support and education for people diagnosed with cancer and their carers to reduce anxiety and distress and improve overall outcomes.
2. Building research capacity and capability for allied health professionals (including radiation therapists) by inspirational leadership and role modelling in allied health-led research
3. Mentoring, supervising, and advocating for innovative and creative research training opportunities and pathways for clinical health professionals (including radiation therapists).

The program of research she leads focuses on preparing patients for radiation therapy; understanding the psychosocial support and



education needs of people diagnosed with cancer and their carers; treatment decision making; survivorship and treatment follow up; return to work after cancer, treatment experience and side effects; and sustainability of the radiation therapy and radiation oncology workforce.

As a professor, Prof Halkett's research is focused on improving psychosocial support and information for people affected by cancer and their families. She develops and tests supportive care interventions for groups with the greatest unmet need, including people with rare cancers (including brain cancer and sarcoma), those in rural and remote communities, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Her work spans the full cancer journey from diagnosis and treatment through survivorship and living well, which aligns closely with the 2023 Australian Cancer Plan.

Professor Halkett's research has consistently focused on improving support for people undergoing cancer treatment and their carers, while strengthening the skills and confidence of radiation therapists. This includes leading the development and translation of RT Prepare, a radiation therapist-led intervention shown to reduce patient anxiety, now implemented across multiple rural and regional services and extended through online training, with earlier work informing international policy.

She has also led internationally impactful tools and resources, including the EORTC QLQ-PRT20 quality-of-life module, now available in 13 languages and cited in clinical guidelines, and the development of online EviQ education modules for radiation oncology professionals accessed by over 1,300 clinicians. Complementing this, she is working with a team of researchers to advance cultural safety in radiation therapy through Indigenous-focused resources and research examining how services support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

ASMIRT warmly congratulates Prof Halkett on receiving the 2025 Varian Award, in recognition of her exceptional and sustained contributions to the radiation therapy profession.

Prof Halkett is presenting on 'Radiotherapy and Beyond: Shaping the Future of Supportive Care' at the ASMIRT 2026 Varian Award Session on Friday 27 March 2026..