

CTNZ Newsletter

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CTNZ ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING 14th September 2015

Our ASM this year will be held in September in Auckland at Domain Lodge, the headquarters of the Cancer Society Auckland and Northland. This year logistics have meant that our ASM could not be attached to the NZSO meeting in November, as in previous years, but we fully intend to resume that alliance in 2016 if possible.

Invited speakers to our ASM include Dr Roslyn Kemp, an immunologist from the University of Otago, whose research interests are applied and molecular immunology, cancer immunobiology and vaccines; Dr Michelle Wilson, who has recently returned from working overseas, will give an account of her research experiences abroad. We will present updates and findings from our trials and studies including two new ones MagLev and KISS (see page 2 for more details).

The final programme will follow shortly but please put the date in your diaries. As always this is a free event but please let our Administrator, Lindsey, know if you will be attending so we can get numbers for catering purposes: l.wylde@auckland.ac.nz



Message from the Director

We have had a busy but exciting last few months preparing and submitting the PIPER study report to the Health Research Council – the wealth of information on colorectal cancer management in New Zealand coming from this project will be pivotal to how as a country we deal with this disease in the future. I want to thank all involved in PIPER for their work to date – we have however only started! There will be a formal publicity event in August (advertised on page 2).

I would also like to congratulate those working on the MagLev study which was awarded HRC feasibility grant funding and also a grant-in-aid from the New Zealand Breast Cancer Foundation. David Porter, Medical Oncologist at Auckland Regional Cancer & Blood Service will be the lead clinician.

The ASCO meeting this year saw the SIRFLOX study presented as a late-breaking abstract with a nearly 8 month increase in liver-specific progression-free survival (PFS), but no overall PFS. This has raised some interesting questions about the possible outcomes for patients with liver-only colorectal cancer mets – answers however will not be available until the combining of the SIRFLOX, FOXFIRE and FOXFIREGlobal databases in another 2 years. New Zealand made a great contribution to this study globally with Dunedin topping the local recruitment statistics.

Finally I would like to remind you of our ASM coming up in September, it will be held at the HQ of CTNZ's foundation sponsor - Cancer Society Auckland & Northland.



CTNZ News

NEW TRIALS FOR CTNZ

MagLev - A Study of Magnesium for Endocrine Related Cognitive Problems in Breast Cancer

We are delighted to announce that CTNZ has been awarded funding from the HRC for this new feasibility study for women on endocrine therapy for breast cancer. We have also received the good news that this has been supplemented with the offer of a supporting grant from the New Zealand Breast Cancer Foundation. Distinguished cancer researcher Professor Bruce Baguley put forward the concept for this study and the MagLev study team also includes CTNZ investigators Professors Mike Findlay and Katrina Sharples, Auckland Hospital breast cancer oncologist Dr David Porter, and neuropsychologist Associate Professor Tony Lambert, an expert in the brain function tests that are the main measures for the study.

Endocrine treatments that modify the effect of the female hormone oestrogen - tamoxifen and aromatase inhibitors - are key treatments for women with breast cancer. These have side effects related to poor memory and concentration, which can discourage women from completing their courses of treatment. The science behind MagLev arises from the fact that having adequate magnesium in the body is important for normal brain function, and magnesium stores are influenced by an effect of oestrogen on the kidney. The question is whether these cognition-related side effects could be reversed by a dietary magnesium supplement. MagLev is a small pilot study designed to test the feasibility for a larger clinical trial. It will compare two groups of women on breast cancer hormone treatments – one randomly assigned to having magnesium tablets daily for 3 months and the other assigned to placebo tablets for 3 months. Magnesium levels and cognitive function tests of the two groups will be compared. A finding that some women benefit from this simple remedy would have enormous global impact.

KISS - a new study for people with chronic myeloid leukaemia

KISS stands for Kinase Inhibition with Sprycel Start-up. It is an exciting Haematology study in the wings for people with newly diagnosed chronic myeloid leukaemia (CML). KISS investigates a new treatment plan using two drugs called tyrosine kinase inhibitors that we already know are very effective in this disorder. The study aims to determine whether there is an advantage to starting people on the newer, more potent inhibitor in order to achieve a faster remission and then to switch to the older, tried and true drug in people who reach a safe level of remission within one year of treatment. Patients' level of response and side effects on each treatment will be carefully monitored. KISS is accompanied by several sub-studies, including one on bone metabolism by the Bone Group at the University of Auckland, and a study looking at predictive molecular signatures in the leukaemia cells at the Leukaemia and Blood Cancer Research Unit, also at the University of Auckland. With planning and funding in the final stages, KISS should be up and running by the end of 2015 in most, if not all Haematology centres throughout New Zealand.

Save the date — Monday 17th August

**The Management of Colorectal Cancer in New Zealand -
Initial findings from New Zealand's largest study of colorectal cancer**

Public Seminar, 5-7pm Monday 17th August 2015, Auckland City Hospital.

if interested please contact communications@uniservices.co.nz

Current Trials

MELVAC

The Phase I dose-finding study was completed in February 2015. The data monitoring committee reviewed the report and agreed Phase II could proceed. The Phase II protocol has been amended and approved by HDEC. Changes to the Phase II study database and CRF are currently ongoing. We hope to launch the Phase II trial at the Wellington site in July. For further information please contact Monica McCusker: m.mccusker@auckland.ac.nz

FOXFIREGlobal

In follow-up phase. Four patients are on full protocol at Wellington, 2 are on protocol treatment at Auckland, 2 at Dunedin and 1 at the Palmerston North site. For further details please contact Monica: m.mccusker@auckland.ac.nz

SIRFLOX

SIRFLOX is ongoing with 6 patients in follow-up at the Auckland site, 5 at Dunedin (one having completed 5 years) and 2 patients each at Palmerston North, Christchurch and Wellington. Preliminary data on progression free survival was presented at this year's ASCO ASM in Chicago, by the study PI, Professor Peter Gibbs. To watch the presentation click on www.sirtex.com/sirflox. For further details please contact Lindsey Wylde: l.wylde@auckland.ac.nz

PIPER

The PIPER Project has completed its first round of analysis on 5667 eligible cases looking at over 960,000 data points to assess quality and equity of care for NZ patients with colorectal cancer. A draft report was submitted to the funders, and received excellent reviewers' feedback. The final report has recently been submitted and following its approval there will be a public presentation of the findings on Monday 17th August (see page 2). The team will continue to work on further analysis. For further information please contact Melissa Firth: m.firth@auckland.ac.nz

SOLD

Recruitment for SOLD closed worldwide last year with 2176 patients recruited. New Zealand contributed 120 patients and monitoring of these is ongoing. Auckland receives regular monitoring due to high recruitment and monitoring visits to the other four sites in New Zealand are planned for later this year. For any queries please contact Monica: m.mccusker@auckland.ac.nz

NET Registry

The aim of the NET Registry project is to record information on all patients diagnosed with a NET in New Zealand. Data collection is ongoing and over 2000 cases of neuroendocrine cancer have been identified for inclusion in the database. Of these, over 1600 cases have been entered. We aim to complete data collection by the end of 2015 and the information collected will help in the planning of better clinical care for patients with NETs.

The NETWORK! Genomics Study

The initial focus of the NETWORK! Genomics Study has been on identifying the genomic characteristics of pancreatic NETs (pNETs). Tissue from approximately 50 patients has been collected, and deep genomic analysis of these tumours is underway. We are aiming to publish results of this first analysis later this year, and are also expanding collection to include other anatomical areas. A separately funded project aiming to identify markers that could be used in a non-invasive diagnostic test is also underway.

For further details about the NET Registry/NETWORK! Genomics Study, please contact Kate: kate.parker@auckland.ac.nz

CTNZ Staff

Congratulations Mr & Mrs Firth!

Congratulations to Melissa and Silas who got married on 25th April and brought some glamour to Huia for the occasion!

The team wish them lots of happiness for their future together.



Upcoming Meetings

NZACRes 2015 Conference, 20 - 21 August 2015, Auckland, NZ

AGITG 2015 Annual Meeting, 2 - 4 September 2015, Sydney, Australia

CTNZ ASM 2015, 14 September 2015, Auckland, NZ

ESMO 2015 Congress, 25 - 29 September 2015, Vienna, Austria

ACTA 2015 Symposium, 7 - 10 October 2015, Sydney, Australia

NZSO, 2 - 3 November 2015, Christchurch, NZ

Melanoma Research Symposium, 5 November 2015, Auckland, NZ

Melanoma Summit, 6 - 7 November 2015, Auckland, NZ

COSA 2015 Annual Meeting, 17 - 19 November 2015, Hobart, Australia

ESMO Asia 2015, 18 - 21 December 2015, Suntec City, Singapore

Fundraiser Awareness

Daffodil Day

Daffodil Day is the Cancer Society's annual flagship event and one of the most important fundraising and awareness campaigns in the country. Taking place this year on Friday 28th August, keep a look out for street appeal volunteer collectors or donate online, by phone or text. Funds will be used to provide patient and family support, fund scientific research into cancer, and to run health promotion programmes to reduce the risk of cancer.



For details, please visit: www.daffodilday.org.nz

Bowel Cancer Awareness Month



June was Bowel Cancer Awareness Month, during which Bowel Cancer New Zealand shared some of the key facts around bowel cancer with New Zealand. Throughout June they used radio, print and social media to build understanding and support within the country.



The symbols of this campaign, a variety of empty chairs, aimed to remind us that bowel cancer affects New Zealanders from all walks of life and sees too many people leave their families and loved ones, too soon.

To donate, or find out more information about Bowel Cancer New Zealand, please visit:

www.beatbowelcancer.org.nz

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SAVE THE DATE

Monday 14th Sept 2015

CTNZ ASM 2015

Location: Domain Lodge, Auckland



With thanks to
the Cancer Society
Auckland and Northland