MEDIA RELEASE

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HEDGEHOG INHIBITORS FOR SKIN CANCER

Today, keynote speaker, Dr Scott Fosko from the Mayo Clinic in Florida, USA, will present on Hedgehog inhibitors as a targeted therapy for skin cancer at the Australasian College of Dermatologists (ACD) Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) in Sydney.

Basal-cell carcinoma is the most commonly diagnosed human cancer, accounting for around 80% of all non-melanoma skin cancers. Abnormal Hedgehog-pathway signalling is the key molecular driver of the development of basal-cell carcinoma, and is seen in more than 90% of cases.

Dr Scott Fosko says: “The new oral medication, Vismodegib, is used for advanced and metastatic basal cell carcinoma. This subset of patients are very difficult to manage and this agent can be quite impactful in their care. I was part of a multinational clinical trial, looking at alternative dosing regimens for patients, some with the genetic condition of basal cell nevus syndrome. These latter patients can have hundreds of basal cells carcinomas over their life, which can have a significant impact on their quality of life.”

Associate Professor Samuel Zagarella, dermatologist with the ACD and Convenor of the 2017 ASM says: “We are excited to have Dr Scott Fosko as a key international speaker at the ACD ASM. The international research he is presenting on was only published in February of this year so is a very new development in the field of dermatology.”

Vismodegib, a first-in-class Hedgehog-pathway inhibitor, is approved for use in adults with advanced basal-cell carcinoma. Patients with multiple basal-cell carcinomas, including those with basal-cell nevus (Gorlin) syndrome, need extended treatment. The clinical trial that Dr Fosko was involved with assessed the safety and activity of two long-term intermittent vismodegib dosing regimens in patients with multiple basal-cell carcinomas.

Dr Fosko says: “Intermittent dosing schedules of vismodegib were shown to be effective with treatment breaks not impacting efficacy. The safety profiles of each regimen were similar and were consistent with previous clinical experience. Intermittent dosing schedules might allow patients with multiple basal cell carcinomas to derive benefit from long-term vismodegib treatment. Further study is warranted.”

References


Links to further information

Annual Scientific Meeting website
A-Z of Skin
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The ACD is the peak medical college accredited by the Australian Medical Council for the training and professional development of medical practitioners in the specialty of dermatology. They provide authoritative information about dermatology to Government, the media, other health professionals and the general public.

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