

PRESS RELEASE

SINGAPORE LED TRIALS GROUP TO UNVEIL NOVEL DATA ON GENOMIC MAKEUP AND RECOMMENDATIONS IN TREATING AND MANAGING LIVER CANCER ON UPCOMING SCIENTIFIC FORUM

- **New understandings in the genetics of liver cancer will assist in the development of more efficient treatment approaches through targeted therapies**
- **New guidelines formulated by world class experts will provide recommendations in administering Yttrium 90 Selective Internal Radiation Therapy for inoperable liver cancer patients**
- **Trials group showcases Singapore's leadership in leading large scale studies targeting one of the most common and deadliest cancer in Asia**

Singapore, 29 May 2015 – The Asia-Pacific Hepatocellular Carcinoma (AHCC) Trials Group has played an active part in their promise to deliver better outcomes to patients through new and exciting treatments for liver cancer in clinical trials. The two major highlights of the second AHCC Scientific Forum; 1) a novel and more efficient approach to develop better targeted therapies for liver cancer, 2) recommendations by a panel of world class experts in liver cancer on treatment using Yttrium 90 Selective Internal Radiation Therapy (SIRT), continues to drive the forefront in managing and treating liver cancer.

The AHCC trials group is a partnership between National Cancer Centre Singapore (NCCS), Singapore Clinical Research Institute (SCRI) and more than 35 major medical centers in the Asia-Pacific across 17 countries. The group has an excellent track record of conducting liver cancer clinical trials in Asia and is currently running its sixth multi-centre clinical trial within the collaborative partnership platform.

About one million new cases worldwide annually with more than 70 percent in Asia, liver cancer is the fourth most common cancer among males and the third most fatal cancer in Singapore.

One of the major highlights of the scientific forum is the new findings from a collaborative study between NCCS and Genome Institute of Singapore (GIS) which adopts a novel approach to investigating how genes in liver cancer may differ from one patient to another.

The study uses the latest technologies in gene sequencing, and shows that in addition to genetic differences between individuals, liver cancer carries very high genetic differences between cancer cells within the same tumor. This high intra-tumoral heterogeneity explains the low efficacy of current targeted drugs in many cancers.

Professor Pierce Chow, Protocol Chair AHCC, Senior Consultant Surgeon NCCS and also the Principal Investigator of the study said, "Most drug development programs only consider the presence/absence of a driver alteration without determining if these are important genetic drivers of the cancer or just passengers in the mutation."

Between 2002 and 2012, the 71 anti-cancer drugs approved by FDA (including 52 molecular targeted drugs) increased median Overall Survival by just 2.1 months.

Dr Zhai Wei Wei, Senior Research Scientist GIS and a key Co-investigator added, "Targeting clonally dominant, truncal drivers on the phylogenetic tree provides a more effective drug development strategy than considering actionable alterations as present or absent."

The AHCC Trials Group is planning a bigger and more definitive longitudinal study among members in the group. The prospective study will leverage on the expertise at the multiple and ethnically different sites within the AHCC Trials Group and could possibly improve the prognosis for patients with liver cancer.

Associate Professor Teoh Yee Leong, Public Health Physician and CEO of Singapore Clinical Research Institute said, "Hepatocellular Carcinoma (HCC) is one of the top ten most common cancer in Asia, mainly because of the endemic status of chronic hepatitis B and C viruses, which leads to liver cirrhosis and an increased risk of HCC. We need to have more research into the treatment of HCC to improve survival of patients."

The second major highlight is the inaugural presentation of the latest recommendations by world class liver cancer experts for administering Y90 SIRT, generally in liver cancer patients who cannot be treated surgically.

The panel of experts met in Singapore on Monday 25 May 2015 under the auspices of the Singapore Clinical Research Institute and reviewed the latest scientific data on the clinical use of Y90 SIRT for liver cancer. A set of consensus practice guidelines were formulated and Dr Kieron Lim, Head of the Division of Gastroenterology & Hepatology at National University Hospital (NUH), presented the practice guidelines.

Dr Lim said, “It was a pleasure to be able to discuss this highly efficacious emerging therapy with a multi-disciplinary group of international experts. The guidelines conceptualises current applications and will be very useful to clinicians looking after patients with liver cancer.”

The expert panel comprises surgeons, hepatologists, medical oncologist, interventional radiologists and nuclear medicine physicians and was chaired by Professor Joseph Lau, an eminent clinician-scientist from the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and a world-class expert on liver cancer.

“AHCC Trials Group secures the access to an experienced network of investigators with a demonstrated track record of success in the field of liver cancer research, provides opportunities for face-to-face meetings with key opinion leaders in this field and getting new therapeutic area updates.

“These major highlights, together with the rest of the presentations by worldwide reputable doctors will deepen our understanding towards the treatment and management of liver cancer”, said Prof Pierce Chow.

Media are invited to attend the Scientific Forum with interview opportunities with various presenters.

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About National Cancer Centre Singapore

National Cancer Centre Singapore (NCCS) provides a holistic and multidisciplinary approach to cancer treatment and patient care. We treat almost 70 per cent of the public sector oncology cases, and they are benefiting from the sub-specialisation of our clinical oncologists. NCCS is also accredited by the US-based Joint Commission International for its quality patient care and safety.

To deliver among the best in cancer treatment and care, our clinicians work closely with our scientists who conduct robust cutting-edge clinical and translational research programmes which have been internationally recognised. NCCS strives to be a global leading cancer centre, and shares its expertise and knowledge by offering training to local and overseas medical professionals. www.nccs.com.sg

About the Singapore Clinical Research Institute (SCRI)

Singapore Clinical Research Institute (SCRI) is a National Academic Research Organisation dedicated to enhance the standards of human clinical research. Its mission is to spearhead and develop core capabilities, infrastructure and scientific leadership for clinical research in Singapore. SCRI is a national clinical trials coordination centre that works with National Medical Research Council (NMRC) to assist the Ministry of Health in implementing clinical trials policy and strategic initiatives to support and develop clinical research competencies locally.

In driving towards its vision, SCRI collaborates with clinicians to enhance Singapore's clinical research and strengthen its expertise in executing multi-site, multi-national studies and the development of regional clinical research networks.

SCRI is a wholly-owned subsidiary of MOH Holdings. <http://www.scri.edu.sg>

About Asia-Pacific Hepatocellular Carcinoma Trials Group

The Asia-Pacific Hepatocellular Carcinoma (AHCC) Trials Group is a collaborative group formed in 1997 by clinicians treating hepatocellular carcinoma in major medical centres in the Asia-Pacific region. The aims of the trials group are to conduct preventive and therapeutic trials in hepatocellular carcinoma, to carry out basic and translational research in this field and to develop training and educational programs pertaining to HCC.

For more information, visit AHCC website at <http://www.scri.edu.sg/index.php/networks-ahcc>

Annex A



National Cancer
Centre Singapore



Asia-Pacific Hepatocellular Carcinoma (AHCC) Trials Group Scientific Forum Programme

- Date : 29 May 2015
Time : 8:30 am – 12:00 pm
Venue : Amphitheatre, Level 2
Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School
8 College Road, Singapore 169857
(opposite Singapore General Hospital, Block 6/7)
- 0830 – 0840 **Welcome Address**
Prof Soo Khee Chee, Director, National Cancer Centre Singapore
- 0840 – 0850 **Updates on the AHCC Trials Group**
Prof Pierce Chow, Protocol Chair, AHCC Trials Group
- 0850 – 0915 **The Spatial Organization and Implication of Intratumor Heterogeneity in Hepatocellular Carcinoma**
Dr Zhai Wei Wei, Senior Research Scientist, Genome Institute of Singapore
- 0915 – 0940 **The Immune Microenvironment of Hepatocellular Carcinoma - A Potential Target for Therapy**
Dr Valerie Chew, Senior Research Scientist, Singhealth Translational Immunology and Inflammation Centre (STIIC) Discovery Centre
- 0940 – 1005 **Metabolism and Liver Diseases**
Dr Ng Ser Sue, Research Fellow, Metabolic Disease Research Programme, Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine, Nanyang Technological University
- 1005 – 1030 **Break**
- 1030 – 1055 **The Gut Microbiota Liver Axis and Cancer**
Dr Parag Kundu, Senior Research Fellow, Microbiota Host Interactions, Nutrigenomics & Metabolism Laboratory, Nanyang Technological University
- 1055 – 1120 **HCC in Malaysia**
Dr Yoong Boon Koon, Head, Hepatobiliary Surgery, University of Malaya
- 1120 – 1150 **Expert Review Panel on Y90 – Outcomes and Recommendations**
Dr Kieron Lim Boon Leng, Head & Consultant, Division of Gastroenterology & Hepatology, National University Hospital
- 1150 – 1200 **Closing**
Prof Pierce Chow, Protocol Chair, AHCC Trials Group
- 1200 – 1300 **Lunch**