

AHCC Trials Group

Newsletter Volume 1, Issue 1 | December 2010

Welcome Messages



By Professor Soo Khee Chee, Group Chair, AHCC Trials Group
Director, National Cancer Centre Singapore

Welcome! We are pleased to provide the first edition of our AHCC Trials Group Newsletter which highlights and describes events and ongoing clinical trials of the AHCC Trials Group. It will be a quarterly publication to keep our members updated of the latest events.

We have come a long way since we started the Trials Group in 1997, the first Hepatocellular Carcinoma (HCC) Clinical Research Network in the region. Since then, we have launched 6 multi-centre clinical trials and new trials are in the pipeline. This would not have been possible without the support of all our members in the Asia-Pacific region. I would like to take this chance to thank everyone for this shared vision and we look forward to new efforts to improve clinical outcomes in patients with HCC.



By Professor Pierce Chow, Protocol Chair,
AHCC 01, 02, 04, 05, 06 multi-center trials
Singapore General Hospital and Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School

Greetings to all members of the AHCC Trials Group!

The year of 2010 has been an exciting year for the Trials Group, with the launch of our latest phase III multi centre trial – **AHCC 06 Multi-Centre Open-Label Randomized Controlled Trial of Selective Internal Radiation Therapy (SIRT) Versus Sorafenib in Locally Advanced Hepatocellular Carcinoma**. This trial is our largest collaboration effort to date. This is an exciting period and we see the development of exciting new therapies for HCC. Collaboration in multicenter efforts becomes essential in order to achieve the scale and timelines necessary for scientific robustness. Over the years, the Trials Group has developed a unique platform for the execution of many multi-centre investigation efforts, and this has contributed significantly to the continued success of our trials to date. The Trials Group will continue to provide thought leadership and organisation in our efforts to improve clinical outcomes in patients with HCC.

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Soaring to New Skies..

About

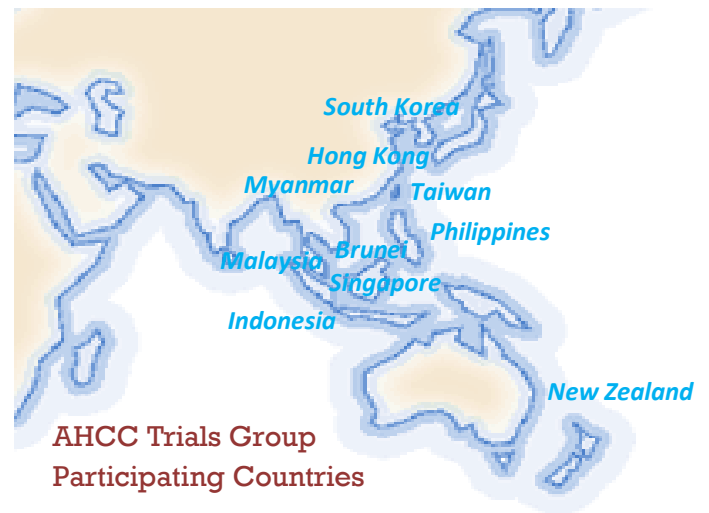
the AHCC Trials Group

It all began in 1997 when clinicians conducting (initially) a single hospital HCC trial at the Singapore General Hospital, teamed up with the Clinical Trials and Epidemiology Research Unit (predecessor of SCRI) , to start a multi-center HCC trial inclusive of centers in the Asia-Pacific region. The early success of this endeavour led to the birth of the Asia-Pacific Hepatocellular Carcinoma Trials Group - a collaborative research group made up of clinicians treating HCC in major medical centres in the Asia Pacific region. Because of the absence of efficacious therapy then and the aggressive natural history of HCC, these clinicians recognised the urgency for collaboration if efficacious therapies were to be developed for the large number of patients with HCC who were mainly found in the Asia-Pacific region.

The secretariat of the AHCC trials group is supported by the National Cancer Centre Singapore and the Millennium Foundation.



The 2nd AHCC Trials Group General Meeting in November 2000



The Trials Group aims to conduct preventive and therapeutic trials in HCC, to carry out basic and translational research in this field and to develop training and educational programs pertaining to HCC. As a result of the support and shared vision of clinicians in the region, significant progress has been made since starting its first multi-center trial in HCC in 1997. To date, the AHCC Trials group has launched 6 multi-center AHCC clinical trials (5 Investigator-initiated) and has grown to include 20 centers in the Asia-Pacific participating in its current clinical trials. This endeavour is supported by the secretariat of the AHCC Trials Group and the Singapore Clinical Research Institute (SCRI), the coordinating and data bodies of the group.

A Brief Recap...

5th AHCC Trials Group General Meeting 2010



The 5th AHCC Trials Group General Meeting 2010 was successfully held at the Duke NUS Graduate Medical School Singapore on the 6th of Feb 2010.

The meeting kicked off with a seminar on 'Current Developments in the Management of Hepatocellular Carcinoma' which was opened to the public.

We were honoured to have Dr Thomas Leung from Hong Kong Sanatorium and Hospital and Dr Donald Poon from National Cancer Centre Singapore as our lecturers at the seminar.

Local and overseas delegates from 29 centres across the Asia-Pacific region attended the afternoon closed door session, during which results of the previous AHCC clinical trials were presented. It was heartening to receive many positive responses from the floor.



The highlight was the 3 new trial (1 phase III and 2 phase II trials) proposals. The meeting ended on a high note leaving delegates excited at the progress of the Trials Group and the prospect of new trials.

For many present it was also an opportunity to reunite with old friends and former scientific collaborators and the making of new friends sharing a common vision – to investigate new efficacious therapies for HCC patients, now and in the future.

From the Network Secretariat



Ms Priscilla Li

This is the 11th year since I first came to Singapore. I still remembered the evening in 1999 when I had a telephone interview with Prof (then Dr) Pierce Chow calling in from Singapore while I was in Hong Kong. Prof Chow asked me whether I am interested to work as a Clinical Trial Co-coordinator for AHCC01. I had just graduated from UK with an MSc at that time and did not have any exposure to clinical research. My reply to Prof Chow was 'I am willing to attend a face to face interview in Singapore at my own expense'. I told myself that this is a challenging job and chances are difficult to come by.

The years have proven to me that my decision was right in leaving my family behind. It would never be easy to start off another chapter in life in a foreign land. However, the experiences that I accumulated and the people who I met were just like an invaluable treasure which I could not get elsewhere.

It is my honor to work in the AHCC Trials Group and to provide secretariat support. I personally witnessed how the Trials Group was being developed. This is a collaborative effort with all the HCC experts which share the similar vision. We wish to see this Trials Group grow to be more successful and beneficial to more patients in return!



Ms Chan Wai Ming
Clinical Research Network Associate

Let us welcome a new member to the AHCC Network! She is a trainee of the Economic Development Board Local-On-the-job Training (LOT) programme and will be supporting the Network Secretariat in the AHCC Trials Group. Prior to joining SCRI, she worked as a research officer at the National Cancer Centre Singapore. Wai Ming has a science background with a BSc (Hons) from Nanyang Technological University, School of Biological Sciences.

Singapore General Hospital and Sirtex Medical Limited Signs Sponsorship Agreement for AHCC06 (SIRveNIB) Trial

On 24th June 2010, we witnessed the formal signing of an agreement by the CEO of Sirtex Medical, Mr Gilman Wong and the CEO of the Singapore General Hospital, Prof Ang Chong Lye at the National Cancer Centre Singapore auditorium. Sirtex Medical has pledged a grant of 8.5 million SGD to support a new investigator-initiated phase-III multi-centre trial (AHCC06) for which competitive funding of 1.65 million SGD had earlier been obtained from the National Medical Research Council Singapore. The trial investigates the relative efficacies of SIR-Spheres yttrium-90 microspheres and the oral therapy Sorafenib on the overall survival of patients with locally-advanced Hepatocellular Carcinoma (HCC). This is the 6th multi-center trial conducted by the AHCC Trials Group and more than 20 centres from 13 countries are expected to participate. The trial is lead by Prof Pierce Chow from Singapore General Hospital who is the PI and protocol chair.



From Left, Prof Pierce Chow (SGH), Ms Enny Kiesworo (SCRI), Prof Soo Khee Chee (NCCS), Prof Ang Chong Lye (SGH), Mr Gilman Wong (Sirtex), A/Prof Tan Say Beng (SCRI), Mr Jeffery Lim (Sirtex), Dr Thiyagarajan Jayabaskar (NMRC), Dr Anthony Goh (SGH), Mr Marius Van Den Berg (Sirtex)

Official Launch of AHCC06 (SIRveNIB) Trial

After the signing ceremony between Sirtex Medical and Singapore General Hospital, the multi-centre Phase III AHCC06 Trial (**Open-Label Randomized Controlled Trial of Selective Internal Radiation Therapy (SIRT) Versus Sorafenib in Locally Advanced Hepatocellular Carcinoma, SIRveNIB**) was officially launched at a press conference held at the National Cancer Centre Singapore (NCCS). The launch was preceded by the presentation of the positive results of the completed AHCC05 phase II trial which was earlier reported at the American Society of Clinical Oncology in Chicago 2 weeks previously. The multi-center AHCC06 is the largest trial to date of the AHCC Trials Group and will recruit 360 patients from the Asia-Pacific region. It will determine which of two currently efficacious therapies is more beneficial and should serve as the first-line therapy in patients with locally-advanced HCC.

All media releases can be found at the AHCC Trials Group Website.



Top: From Left, Prof Pierce Chow (SGH), Prof Soo Khee Chee (NCCS), Mr Gilman Wong (Sirtex), Prof Ang Chong Lye (SGH), Prof London Lucien Ooi (NCCS)



Bottom: From Left, Prof Teo Eng Kiong (CGH), Dr Victor Lee (NUH) and A/Prof Kenneth Mak (KTPH) at the press conference for the launch of AHCC06 Trial.

Wanted: SCRI as a Trial Coordinating Centre



SCRI is an Academic Research Organisation dedicated to enhancing the standards of human clinical research through driving the development of core capabilities, infrastructure and intellectual and scientific leadership in Singapore. It houses an experienced and highly-qualified team of scientists and research staff, offering a comprehensive suite of clinical research capabilities. The areas of expertise range from clinical project development to execution.

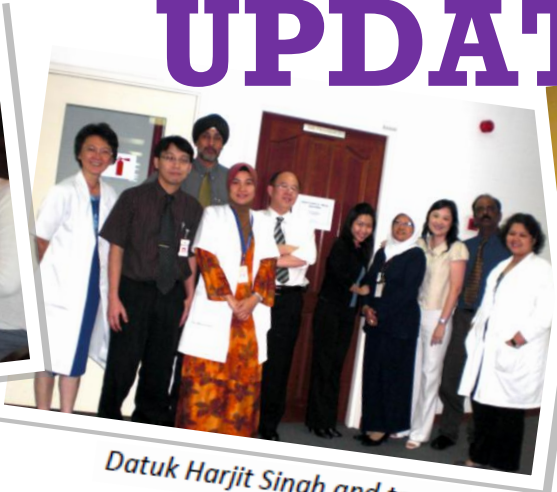
SCRI collaborates in and supports academic, public-sector and industry-sponsored studies ranging from proof-of-concept to late-phase clinical trials and epidemiological studies. Its vision is to develop SCRI and Singapore scientists as an ASEAN hub for clinical research excellence. In driving towards its vision, SCRI continues to enhance Singapore's clinical research capabilities and strengthen its expertise in executing single and multi-site, multi-national research and developing regional clinical research networks.

<http://www.scri.edu.sg/>

STUDY UPDATES



Prof Han Ho-Seong and team



Datuk Harjit Singh and team



Dr Ian Homer Y. Cua and team

Published in
Hepatology Vol. 36,
No. 5

AHCC01: Randomised Trial of High-dose Tamoxifen versus Placebo in the Treatment of Inoperable Hepatocellular Carcinoma

Protocol Chair: Prof Pierce Chow, Singapore General Hospital (Department of General Surgery)

AHCC clinical trials manuscript submitted for publication:

AHCC02: Randomised Trial of Megestrol Acetate versus Placebo in the Treatment of Inoperable Hepatocellular Carcinoma

Protocol Chair: Prof Pierce Chow, Singapore General Hospital (Department of General Surgery)

AHCC03: Randomised Trial of Adjuvant Intra-arterial Radio-active Iodine after Curative Resection of Hepatocellular Carcinoma

Protocol Chair: Dr Alexander Chung, Singapore General Hospital (Department of General Surgery)

Published in International Journal of Radiation Oncology *Biology*Physics Vol. 67, Issue 3

Phase IIA trial preceding AHCC04: Dose Escalating Trial of Intra-tumoral BrachySil in Unresectable Hepatocellular Carcinoma.

Protocol Chair: Prof Pierce Chow, Singapore General Hospital (Department of General Surgery)

Recently Completed Clinical Trial:



Ms Chua Yee Chien,
CRA of AHCC05

AHCC05 Phase I/II Study of SIR-Spheres Plus Sorafenib as First Line Treatment in Patients With Non-Resectable Primary Hepatocellular Carcinoma

Protocol Chair:

Prof Pierce Chow, Singapore General Hospital (Department of General Surgery)

Participating Centers and Site Principal Investigators:

Seoul National University Bundang Hospital, Korea (Professor Han Ho-Seong)
Hospital Selayang, Malaysia (Datuk Harjit Singh)
Yangon GI & Liver Centre, Myanmar (Professor Khin Maung Win)
Singapore General Hospital, Singapore (Dr Alexander Chung)
National Cancer Centre, Singapore (Dr Choo Su Pin)

Study Status:

The trial opened in June 2008 and recruited its last (35th) patient on 11 June 2009. Following recruitment closure, the focus of the study is currently on patient follow-up and data collection (completion of the Case Report Forms); site monitoring and data verification are ongoing.

AHCC05 Study Highlights!

The positive results of AHCC05 have been presented at the prestigious 2010 Annual Meeting of American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) in Chicago, USA, on 6th June 2010. It was well received by the delegates at the annual meeting. In addition, the results of AHCC05 were also announced at the press conference in Singapore on 24th June 2010 at the National Cancer Centre Singapore.

For more details and to view the abstract and poster, please visit the AHCC Trials Group Website @ <http://www.scri.edu.sg/index.php/latest-updates/167-ahcc05>



Right: Prof Khin Maung Win and team

The Newly Launched Clinical Trial! AHCC06 (SIRveNIB)

Phase III Multi-Centre Open-Label Randomized Control Trial of Selective Internal Radiation Therapy (SIRT) Versus Sorafenib in Locally Advanced Hepatocellular Carcinoma



Ms Fayce Lau,
Project Manager
of AHCC06

Study Objectives:

This study will evaluate the efficacy of selective internal radiation therapy (SIRT) using SIR-Spheres[®] yttrium-90 microspheres compared to Sorafenib in the treatment of patients with locally advanced primary hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC). The primary objective of this study is to determine a difference, if any, in overall survival between the two treatment arms.

Protocol Chair:

Prof Pierce Chow, Singapore General Hospital (Department of General Surgery)

Study Status:

Singapore General Hospital & National Cancer Centre Singapore opened recruitment on 9th July 2010. **The first patient was recruited on 12th July 2010.** Following which, Yangon GI & Liver Centre (Myanmar) and National University Hospital (Singapore) held its study initiation on the 9th Sept 2010 and 29th Sept 2010 respectively. Just recently on 25th Nov 2010, Auckland City Hospital, New Zealand, has completed its study initiation. Altogether, **5 sites have been initiated and are currently recruiting:** Singapore General Hospital; National Cancer Centre Singapore; National University Hospital; Yangon & GI Centre and Auckland City Hospital. To date, we have a total of 19 recruited patients with 7 patients randomized to the SIR-Spheres treatment and 12 to the Sorafenib treatment arm. We target to hold the next study initiation for RIPAS hospital, Brunei in January 2011.

BUZZ: Happenings

- >> Articles on AHCC05 and AHCC06 Clinical Trials are published in the Nov Issue of *Medical Progress* and in the Dec Issue of *Medical Grapevine*.
- >> AHCC Trials Group Website is in the midst of being revamped!
- >> New Trials coming up: Details will be provided in the next issue.

Acknowledgements:

Millennium Foundation Singapore for supporting the secretariat. NMRC Singapore, SingHealth Foundation, Sirtex Medical and Bayer for supporting our clinical trials.

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AHCC06 Invited Centers and Site Principal Investigators:

Australia

Austin Hospital (Dr Paul J. Gow)
Royal Prince Alfred Hospital (Prof Simone Strasser)
Southern Health Monash Medical Centre (Prof William Sievert)
Westmead Hospital (Prof Jacob George)

Brunei

Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Saleha (RIPAS) Hospital
(Prof Kenneth Kok)

Hong Kong

Prince of Wales Hospital, The Chinese University of Hong Kong
(Prof Simon Yu)
Queen Elizabeth Hospital (Dr Philip Kwok)
Queen Mary Hospital (Prof Ronnie Poon)

Indonesia

Cipto Mangunkusumo Hospital, University of Indonesia, Jakarta
(Prof L.A Lesmana)
University of Udayana, Rumah Sakit Sanglah Denpasar, Bali
(Prof Tjakra Wibawa Manuaba)

Korea

Asan Medical Center (Prof Yoon Hyun-Ki)
Korea University Anam Hospital (Prof Kim Yun-Hwan)
Seoul National University Bundang Hospital (Prof Han Ho-Seong)
Seoul St. Mary's Hospital (Prof Bae Si-Hyun)
Severance Hospital, Yonsei University College of Medicine
(Prof Kim Do-Young)
St. Vincent's Hospital (Prof Yang Jin-Mo)

Malaysia

Hospital Selayang (Datuk Harjit Singh)
Penang Adventist Hospital (Dr T. Aloysius Raj)

Mongolia

National Cancer Center of Mongolia
(Dr Ariunaa Khasbazar)

Myanmar

Yangon GI & Liver Centre (Prof Khin Maung Win)

New Zealand

Auckland Uniservices,
(Auckland City Hospital) (Dr Adam Bartlett)

Philippines

Davao Doctor's Hospital (Dr Rolley Rey Lobo)
Makati Medical Center (Dr Catherine SC Teh)
St. Luke's Medical Center (Dr Ian Homer Y. Cua)
The Medical City (Dr Janus Ong)

Singapore

Changi General Hospital (Dr Jessica Tan)
Khoo Teck Puat Hospital (Dr Jude Lee)
National Cancer Centre Singapore (Dr Choo Su Pin)
National University Hospital (Dr Stephen Chang)
Singapore General Hospital (Dr Cheow Peng Chung)
Tan Tock Seng Hospital (Dr Liau Kui Hin)

Taiwan

Chang Gung Memorial Hospital (Dr Hung Chien-Fu)
National Taiwan University Hospital (Dr Liang Po-Chin)
Taipei Veterans General Hospital (Dr Lee Rheun-Chuan)

Thailand

Chiang Mai University (Prof Sumitra Tongprasert)