

Liverpool ECMC (LECMC) Summary of Key Achievements 2008/09

Expansion of portfolio: The Liverpool ECMC has 59 trials in its portfolio, an increase of 20 since January 2008. There are also nine trials lined up to be adopted.

Expansion of the Management Board and recruitment of nurses: The LECMC Management Board has expanded from 24 members to 31 over the past year. Two Research Practitioners have been recruited and have successfully integrated with clinical teams, MDTs and the Cancer Research Network promoting the LECMC to colleagues and patients and significant training needs have been addressed.

Opening of Good Clinical Laboratory Practice (GCLP) laboratories: The GCLP laboratories opened in summer 2008, enabling sample reception, storage, processing, and downstream translational studies. Specialist equipment, boosted by a successful application to the NIHR, includes MagNA Pure Compact System for automated nucleic acid purification, a LightCycler480 System 2, a FACSCANTO 6 colour analyser, and a Triple quadrupole-ion trap mass spectrometer. A Quality Assurance Manager was appointed (Nov. 2008) and a further £200,000 investment to expand the laboratories and storage capacity is underway.

Integration of Biobanking Capabilities: The LECMC receives and stores samples from trials in the following cancers: Chronic Lymphocytic Leukaemia (UK CLL Trials Biobank – receives samples from all patients entering national trials of CLL), Pancreatic (ESPAC 1, 3, and 4, TeloVac), Head and Neck (HOPON), Uveal melanoma (ITEM), and from a variety of cancer types (LIVC3). Other tissue resources integrated into the LECMC GCLP network include **1)** The Liverpool Cancer Tissue Bank Research Centre which holds 15,902 paraffin samples and 12,767 frozen samples from 4,898 patients representing 18 different cancer types, tissue microarrays for Breast, Colorectal, Head and Neck, Pancreatic, Nasal and Renal cancers; **2)** The Liverpool Lung Cancer project which holds specimens on over 10,000 individuals; **3)** The University of Liverpool Leukaemia Bank which holds 40,000 vials of patient cells, collected over 20 years. Material stored includes leukaemia cells, plasma and germline DNA from 485 local patients diagnosed with chronic lymphocytic leukaemia, along with the clinical data for these patients. Serial patient samples and clinical data are also stored for chronic myeloid leukaemia (CML) (230 patients) as well as a variety of other leukaemias and lymphomas (161 patients). The bank is the custodian of trial material for the NCRI and securely stores 190 samples from 4 trials.

Development of New TRICC/NAC Applications and Phase I/II studies: Funding was awarded by the CR-UK Translational Research in Clinical Trials Committee for the analysis of pancreatic serum samples using proteomic approaches for biomarker discovery (work to begin March 2009). This was a joint award to University of Liverpool and University College London. TRICC funding was also obtained for the UK CLL Trials Biobank and for biomarker studies as part of the LRF CLL4 trial.

Closure/completion of trials: A) EPIC trials: The CML group closed its 'Evaluation of Peptide Immunisation in CML' (EPIC) pair of trials in 2008. Both completed their recruitment targets. Manuscripts are under review (with interim positive feedback; Blood, IF 10.9), or in preparation (two manuscripts for submission to Blood) respectively. There is ongoing discussion about the statistical feasibility of a follow-on phase III study. **B) KAbI:** The results of the KAbI trial aimed at evaluating the safety and tolerability of KAb201, an anti-carcinoembryonic antigen monoclonal antibody, labelled with 131 I in pancreatic cancer given either intravenously or intra-arterially were published (*Sultana A, Shore S, Raraty MG, Vinjamuri S, Evans JE, Tudur Smith C, Lane S, Chauhan S, Bosonnet L, Garvey C, Sutton R, Neoptolemos JP, Ghaneh P*). *BMC Cancer*. 2009 Feb 25;9(1):66). **C) METXIA®-OB83:** The METXIA®-OB83 trial, designed to measure the safety and efficacy, in advanced pancreatic cancer patients, of MetXia-OB83 (a retroviral vector harbouring a cytochrome P450 gene) combined with cyclophosphamide, has completed patient recruitment and data is being cleaned for analysis. **D) CLL206:** The NCRI CLL206 trial of alemtuzumab in combination with methylprednisolone for high-risk CLL completed recruitment ahead of schedule in February 2008. Data will be presented at the European Haematology Association meeting in June 2009.

Hosted the New Perspectives In Head & Neck Premalignant Lesions Symposium 27/02/2009: Following discussions within the NCRI H&N CSGs about priorities for biomarker studies, a national meeting "New Perspectives in H&N Pre-malignant Lesions" was organised by Mr Richard Shaw and hosted by the LECMC on 27th February 2009, in Liverpool. Delegates (from UK and Europe) totalling 125 from a variety of disciplines presented their latest findings and discussed areas of greatest clinical need. Keynote lectures were warmly received given by Dr Ruud Brakenhoff, Research Director of the Lung & H&N group in VUMC Amsterdam and Dr Jay Boyle from Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Centre New York. It is hoped that a further meeting on this theme will be arranged by the Newcastle team and that further themed H&N symposia will be hosted within Liverpool in future years.

Symposium in Therapeutic Modelling in Paediatric Oncology: Dr Heather McDowell from the Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust co-organised the Symposium in Therapeutic Modelling in Paediatric Oncology, held in Rome on 22nd January 2009. This was a very successful event and has fostered more collaborative studies, focusing on new therapeutic strategies.