

NEWSLETTER | ISSUE 8 | FEBRUARY 2010

Welcome to the first 2011 edition of the ANZMTG Newsletter. The year ahead promises to be a busy and productive time with ANZMTG commencing work on new research projects, consumer initiatives and increasing the participation of our members. Please check the ANZMTG website to keep abreast of our activities throughout the year.

WBRTMel Trial Investigator Meeting, November 2010

An Investigator meeting was held in November for the Whole Brain Radiotherapy trial (ANZMTG 01/07) at the Novotel hotel Darling Harbour. The event was well attended by site investigators and study coordinators from around the country and overseas, and allowed staff to meet with the trial management committee and operations team. Following an opening address by Professor Thompson, the group enjoyed dinner with presentations by study chair Dr Gerald Fogarty and trial manager Libby Paton. The timing to coincide with the Society of Melanoma Research Congress in Sydney allowed representatives from our international sites in the UK and Norway to attend. Thank you to all who attended; we look forward to an even bigger group at the next meeting as the trial continues to grow and build momentum.

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*Left: WBRT
Investigators and
site staff with study
Chair Dr Gerald
Fogarty, members
of the TMC and
operations team.*

ANZMTG Annual General Meeting, November 2010

The ANZMTG AGM was held in Sydney on 6 November 2010 and was followed by the Annual Scientific Meeting, during which various new proposals and ANZMTG trials were presented by their respective study chairs. If you would like a copy of the minutes or presentations, please email the ANZMTG office (anzmtg@sydney.edu.au).

ANZMTG Staff Update

A warm welcome to Paul Wagland who has recently commenced as a new project officer for the Australia and New Zealand Melanoma Trials Group. Paul is looking forward to leading activities for new protocols, including the RTN2 trial in neurotropic melanoma of the head and neck as well as other new collaborative intergroup trials. Paul has completed his PhD in Psychology at Macquarie University and was working extensively in research projects on the evolutionary function of emotions as well as moral development including an investigation into the extent to which children can be held criminally responsible for their behaviour. To assist with his transition from psychology-based research to clinical trials, Paul is currently enrolled in the Graduate Certificate in Drug Development.



Neurotropic Melanoma: the focus of an upcoming trial

Neurotropic melanoma is a rare subtype of melanoma characterised by the presence of melanoma cells around nerve sheaths (perineural invasion) or within nerves (intraneural invasion). It is an uncommon feature in cutaneous malignant melanoma but it is this feature which predisposes towards a high local relapse rate. Neurotropism is especially likely to occur in desmoplastic melanoma¹ where it may be as high as 40 – 60%²⁻⁴. Desmoplastic melanoma tends to occur in a slightly older age group than conventional types of melanoma. It is more frequent in men and most often occurs in the head and neck region in individuals with chronic sun damage⁵.

Desmoplastic/neurotropic melanomas usually appear as a non-descript plaque, nodule or thickening. Sometimes there is pigmentation but in many cases, pigmentation is absent. Unfortunately, due to the lack of distinctive clinical presentation features, these melanomas are often misdiagnosed⁶.

Desmoplastic/neurotropic melanoma is less likely than other types of melanomas to spread throughout the body but it is locally aggressive. Local recurrence rates can be as high as 40% to 60%²⁻⁴. Local control is therefore especially important for this type of melanoma.

The ANZMTG are working collaboratively with the Trans Tasman Oncology Group (TROG) who have initiated a trial to investigate the role of radiation therapy in reducing local relapse for neurotropic melanoma. Neurotropic melanoma is typically managed with surgery. Generous surgical margins are considered important in minimizing the likelihood of local relapse^{2,5}. In some instances, however, the location of the tumour makes it difficult to achieve optimal surgical margins. Where surgical margins are compromised, radiation therapy may be effective in reducing the risk of local relapse and it is the purpose of the new TROG and ANZMTG trial to investigate this hypothesis. The trial is a two-armed randomised controlled trial which compares surgery alone with surgery plus post-operative radiation for patients with completely resected primary melanoma showing histological features of neurotropism.

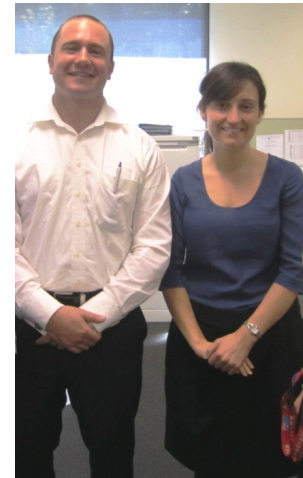
The Trial Chair is Dr Matthew Foote of the Princess Alexandra Hospital in Queensland. ANZMTG are working collaboratively with Dr Foote and TROG. Currently Princess Alexandra Hospital is open to recruitment under an older version of the protocol. The current protocol is in the process of being approved and we are hoping to have the trial open at other sites in Australia and internationally by early this year. For more information on this trial or for enquiries relating to participation in this trial please call Paul Wagland of the ANZMTG on 02 9911 7352.

References

1. Reed JG, Leonard DD. Neurotropic melanoma: a variant of desmoplastic melanoma. *Am. J. Surg. Pathol.* 1979; 3: 301-11
2. Smithers BM, McLeod GR, Little JH. Desmoplastic melanoma: patterns of recurrence. *World J Surg.* 1992; 16: 186-190.
3. Jaroszewski D, Pockaj B, DiCaudo D et al. The clinical behavior of desmoplastic melanoma. *Am. J. Surg.* 2001; 182: 590-5
4. Vongtama R, Safa A, Gallardo D et al. Efficacy of radiation therapy in the local control of desmoplastic melanoma. *Head and Neck* 2003; 25: 423-8.
5. Quinn MJ, Crotty KA, Thompson JF, Coates AS, O'Brien CJ, McCarthy WH. Desmoplastic and desmoplastic neurotropic melanoma. *Cancer.* 1998; 83: 1128-35.
6. Chen JY, Hruby G, Scolyer RA et al. Desmoplastic neurotropic melanoma: a clinicopathologic analysis of 128 cases. *Cancer* 2008; 113(10) 2770-8.

Cancer Australia

ANZMTG would like to acknowledge funding received from the Australian Government through Cancer Australia.



Above: Study Chair, Dr Matthew Foote with Melanoma Institute Australia study coordinator, Maria Gonzalez

NZ Melanoma Summit 11 March 2011

New Zealand professionals working in melanoma will gather at Te Papa in Wellington on 11 March 2011 for the second national Melanoma Summit. The one-day program includes overseas experts, speakers on New Zealand innovations, and workshops on prevention, clinical management and research. Leading Australian speakers are:



- Professor Bruce Armstrong: Causes and prevention of Melanoma
- Professor Peter Soyer: Clinical dermatology, dermoscopy and dermatopathology
- Professor Richard Kefford: Melanoma biology and therapy
- Lisa McFadyen: Melanoma Patients Australia

The 'Current Best Practice Advice on Prevention and Early Detection' workshop will be chaired by Craig Sinclair, Director of Cancer Education at the Cancer Council Victoria.

To register and attend the NZ Melanoma Summit email: registrations@hsc.org.nz

Australian Family Melanoma Study – A Move to Ban Sunbeds For Under 30s

Following the release of a landmark Australian collaborative study involving the University of Sydney, University of Melbourne, Westmead Institute of Cancer Research, Melanoma Institute Australia, Cancer Council Victoria and Cancer Council Queensland, the NSW state government will extend its restrictions on sunbed use. This study is the first of its kind to investigate the use of sunbeds and melanoma in young adults and showed that those who had a history of solarium use were 41% more likely to develop melanoma. According to the findings, three quarters of sunbed users were under 30 years of age, and participants who used a solarium before 20 or more than 10 times doubled their risk of developing melanoma.

The findings will impact NSW legislation from 2011. Current regulations prohibit tanning units for people under the age of 18, or those with Skin Photo Type 1. From April 2011 under 25 year-olds and those with Skin Photo Type 2 will be banned, to be extended to anyone under the age of 30 in August. The NSW Minister for Health (Cancer) at the time, Frank Sartor, said solariums should "see the writing on the wall" and a total ban on tanning beds would be considered in the near future.

References

1. Cust et al. Conley J, Lattes R, Orr W. Sunbed use during adolescence and early adulthood is associated with increased risk of early onset melanoma. Desmoplastic malignant melanoma (a rare variant of spindle cell melanoma). *Int Journal of Cancer, Published online ahead of print, 28th of July, 2010*
2. Media Release 25 November 2010 | Frank Sartor MP: Public consultation called on new Solaria Regulation
http://www.canceraction.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/MEDIA-RELEASE_Frank-Sartor_Solariums_25.11.10.pdf

Australian Cancer Trials Website – www.australiancancertrials.gov.au

A Cancer Australia initiative, this new website is intended as a free information service for clinicians, researchers and patients and lists information on cancer clinical trials currently in the planning stages, open to recruitment, closed or in follow-up. The 'plain English' guide includes general information on clinical trial participation and provides patients with access to current trials information, to use as a basis for further discussions with their oncologist. The site is updated daily with information from the [Australian New Zealand Clinical Trials Registry](#) and ClinicalTrials.gov. The website was launched by Professor Jim Bishop, Chief Medical Officer for the Australian Government, in November 2010.

The Ethical and Scientific Review of Clinical Trials in NSW

Before any clinical trial can be conducted, a rigorous ethical and scientific review of the proposed research must be conducted. In NSW, Public Health Organisations have established centralised Human Research Ethics Committees which provide the ethical and scientific review. The review process is designed to ensure the research has merit, is ethical and meets the standards in the 'National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research' as well as other relevant regulations. Following the full NSW HREC submission, the suitability of individual institutions (e.g. a hospital) is then assessed by the institution's 'Governance Officer'. Only when both the NSW HREC and the institution Governance Officer approve of the trial can recruitment commence at the institution. Further details about this process can be found at: http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/resources/ethics/research/pdf/info_for_investigators_Nov_2010.pdf

Current Clinical Trials Update

ANZMTG 02.09 Vitamin D following primary treatment of melanoma at high risk of recurrence - a pilot placebo controlled randomised trial (*Acronym: Mel-D*)

Chief Investigator: Dr Robyn Saw; Trial Co-ordinator: Maria Gonzalez

Status: Open to recruitment (*Melanoma Institute Australia, The Poche Centre, only*)
 Current accrual: 1
 Target accrual: 75 patients over 2 years

For further information on the trial, contact Maria Gonzalez on +61 2 9911 7300 or email maria.gonzalez@melanoma.org.au.

ANZMTG RP1.09 Improving Quality of Life (QoL) measurement for melanoma patients: Validity and reliability study of QoL instruments in a NSW population (*Acronym: MEL-QOL Research Study*)

Chief Investigator: Associate Professor Julie Winstanley; Trial Co-ordinator: Bridget Myles

Status: Phase 1 and 2: QOL issues list generation, assessment of relevance/importance and development of new items for module (completion September 2011)

Current accrual: 15 Health Care Professionals (Australia)

Target accrual: Phase 1 and 2, 42 Health Care Professionals and 21 Patients (across 7 countries, Australia, New Zealand, The Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, Italy, England)

For further information on the project, contact Julie Winstanley on +61 2 9911 7271 or email julie.winstanley@melanoma.org.au and bridget.myles@melanoma.org.au.

ANZMTG 01.09 A randomised trial of post-operative radiation therapy following wide excision of neurotropic melanoma of the head and neck (*Acronym: RTN2*)

Chief Investigator: Dr. Matthew Foote; Trial Co-ordinator: Janelle Meakin

Status: Open to recruitment (*Princess Alexandra Hospital, QLD only*)
 Current accrual: 1
 Target accrual: 100 patients over 5 years

For further information on the trial, contact Janelle Meakin on +61 7 3240 2498 or email janelle.meakin@health.qld.gov.au.

ANZMTG 01.07 Whole Brain Radiotherapy (WBRT) following local treatment of intracranial metastases of melanoma - A randomised phase III trial (*Acronym: WBRT-MEL*)

Chief Investigator: Dr Gerald Fogarty; Trial Co-ordinator: Marianne Byrne

Status: Open to recruitment
 Current accrual: 39
 Target accrual: 60 patients by Jun 2011 (pilot); 200 patients over 5 years (full study)

For further information on the trial, contact Marianne Byrne on +61 2 9911 7351 or email marianne.byrne@melanoma.org.au.

New Ideas?

If you have any ideas for new research we welcome new proposals for consideration. For more information or to submit a new proposal the **ANZMTG Clinical Trial Protocol Synopsis/Research Proposal Synopsis** is available for download and completion through the ANZMTG website.

Current Clinical Trials Update Continued

A phase III multicenter randomized trial of sentinel lymphadenectomy and complete lymph node dissection versus sentinel lymphadenectomy alone, in cutaneous melanoma patients with molecular or histopathological evidence of metastases in the sentinel node (*Acronym: MSLT II*)

Chief Investigator: Dr Don Morton; Trial Co-ordinator: Lisa van Kreuningen

Status: Open to recruitment
Current accrual: 1154 (worldwide)
Accrual target: 1925 patients over 7 years

MSLT I follow-up continues.

For further information on both trials, contact Lisa van Kreuningen on +1 310 5827053 or email lvk@jwci.org. For Melanoma Institute Australia co-ordinators, email Jo Dalton and Maria Synott on jo.dalton@melanoma.org.au and maria.synott@melanoma.org.au respectively.

ANZMTG 01.02 A randomised clinical trial of surgery versus surgery plus adjuvant radiotherapy for regional control in patients with completely resected macroscopic nodal metastatic melanoma

Chief Investigator: Associate Professor Bryan Burmeister; Trial Co-ordinator: Juliana Di Iulio

Status: Closed; publication of 3rd analysis pending.

For further information on the trial, contact Juliana Di Iulio on +61 3 9656 3786 or email juliana.diiulio@petermac.org.



What More Can ANZMTG Do For Its Members?

ANZMTG are currently preparing an online survey for distribution to our members early in 2011. The purpose of the survey is for ANZMTG to learn how better we can serve our members. We are seeking to identify:

- 1) What areas of research our members are currently working on and in what locations
- 2) What are the barriers to conducting clinical trials and engaging in investigator driven research projects
- 3) What are the current priorities in melanoma research & is their room for ANZMTG engagement

We are keen to hear from the members and hope to integrate the results of the survey into our operations and our future planning and clinical research activities. ANZMTG will send all Full and Associate Members the survey link in an email. We realize that all of our members are very busy people but participation in the survey would be most appreciated and the responses will assist us in providing a better service to our members.

If you have any questions about the survey please do not hesitate to contact Paul Wagland, ANZMTG Project Officer, on 02 9911 7352. We look forward to hearing your ideas and suggestions.

2011 Calendar

Date	Name of meeting	Place	Secretariat contact details
<i>February</i>			
13-18	Inaugural Cancer Symposium, University of Otago, Wellington	Wellington New Zealand	E: meetingswithmayo@xtra.co.nz W: www.uow.otago.ac.nz/cancersymposium.html
<i>March</i>			
2-7	Society of Surgical Oncology Annual Cancer Symposium	San Antonio Texas	Society of Surgical Oncology W: www.surgonc.org
11	Melanoma Network New Zealand Summit 2011	Te Papa Wellington	E: melnet@melanoma.org.nz W: www.melanoma.org.nz/MelNet
18-20	Eurasian Congress on Melanoma and Skin Cancers	St Petersburg Russia	Eurasian Federation of Oncology (EAFO) W: www.eafo.info
<i>April</i>			
11-14	TROG Annual Scientific Meeting	Adelaide Australia	E: trog@trog.com.au W: www.trog.org.au
14-15	10 th International Netherlands Cancer Institute Head and Neck Symposium	Amsterdam Netherlands	E: kno@nki.nl W: www.hoofdhalskanker.info/skinsymposium
<i>May</i>			
12-14	4 th International Symposium on Cancer Metastasis and the Lymphovascular System: Basis for Rational Therapy	New York USA	E: cancermets@paradigm.com W: www.cancermets.org
15-18	44 th Annual Scientific Meeting of The Australasian College of Dermatologists	Perth Australia	E: rsheaves@dermcoll.asn.au W: www.dermcoll.asn.au
24-29	22 nd World Congress of Dermatology	Seoul Korea	E: info@wcd2011.org W: www.wcd2011.org
<i>June</i>			
3-7	American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO)	Chicago Illinois	W: chicago2011.asco.org
20-23	7 th European Association of Dermato-Oncology (EADO) Congress	Nantes France	E: info@eado2011.com W: www.eado2011.com
<i>August</i>			
10-12	Medical Oncology Group of Australia (MOGA)	Adelaide Australia	E: moga@moga.org.au W: www.moga.org.au
<i>September</i>			
15 – 17	15th Congress of the European Society of Surgical Oncology (ESSO)	Bordeaux France	European CanCer Organisation (ECCO) E: ESSO2010@ecco-org.eu W: www.ecco-org.eu
23-27	Joint European CanCer Organisation (ECCO) 16 th -36 th European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO) Multidisciplinary Congress	Stockholm Sweden	W: www.essoweb.org
<i>November</i>			
9-12	Society of Melanoma Research and the 5th International Melanoma Centers Meetings	Tampa Florida USA	E: info@societymelanomaresearch.org W: www.societymelanomaresearch.org
15-17	Clinical Oncological Society Australia (COSA) Annual Scientific Meeting	Perth Australia	E: cosa@cancer.org.au W: www.cosa.org.au