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Network News

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On-going Clinical Trials Update

As we have such positive news to report on recruitment into UK DCTN trials we thought we should make it front page news! Thank you to all those involved in recruiting into these studies and keep up the good work, it does make a difference.



www.patchtrial.co.uk

We are now beginning to see the benefits of CLRN nursing support and the recent advertising campaign for the PATCH study. 220 patients have now been recruited into the study, leaving a rate of 13 patients/month needed to recruit to target by the end of the year.



www.blistertrial.co.uk

There are now 38 sites open to recruitment in the UK, and 7 centres will open to recruitment shortly in Germany. Recruitment is going well, with 16 patients having been randomised to date. If you are interested in becoming a recruiting centre for this study investigating the use of doxycycline to treat bullous pemphigoid, please contact the trial manager Caroline Onions or visit the newly revamped website www.blistertrial.co.uk.

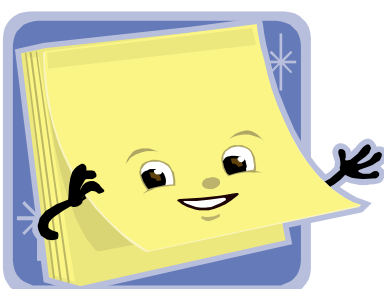


www.stopgaptrial.co.uk

A total of 49 centres across the UK are now taking part in this study, with 32 open to recruitment. A total of 7 patients have now been recruited, 5 into the full RCT and 2 into the observational study. If you are interested in finding out more about this study comparing the use of cyclosporin and oral prednisolone to treat pyoderma gangrenosum, please contact the trial manager Eleanor Mitchell or visit the website which is now up and running www.stopgaptrial.co.uk.

LIMIT 1

A trial manager has now been appointed for the LIMIT 1 study, a phase II proof of principle study investigating the use of imiquimod in the treatment of lentigo maligna. Nazia Boota is joining the UK DCTN team from the Children's Cancer and Leukaemia Group at Leicester University and will be in post from the beginning of October.



Reminder

The Closing Date for the UK DCTN SpR Fellowship and Nursing Prize Awards is Friday 23rd October. Please ensure that your applications are in by this time and if you have any queries please contact the Network Manager, Carron Layfield.

Annual Evidence Based Update Meeting 2010– Eczema

Following on from feedback from delegates at the meeting on urticaria earlier this year, the subject topic for the 2010 event has been chosen and the meeting will focus on eczema.

The meeting, will take place on Thursday 13th May at Holywell Park in Loughborough and will contain presentations on recently completed clinical trials, systematic reviews and updates on clinical practice. All proceeds from the event will be donated to the UK DCTN pump priming funds. To register, or for further information, please contact Carron Layfield.



What is Skcin?

It is now three years since Skcin (The Karen Clifford Skin Cancer Charity) gained charitable status. With the primary objective of significantly raising public awareness of the dangers of over exposure to UV, Skcin have attained UK wide recognition for raising the profile of skin cancer in the UK in a variety of ways. This is a huge move forward for skin cancer awareness which can only be positive for skin cancer research. Skcin are helping to promote the involvement of consumers in the research development process which will be of benefit to the UK DCTN, particularly with regard to the squamous cell carcinoma project (which is part of the NIHR programme grant) and the skin cancer prevention study being developed by Charlotte Proby in Dundee.

The Nottingham based charity believe that engaging with the media is the key to bringing about the necessary culture change in regard to UV exposure. As well as commencing an on-going relationship with The Sun newspaper, Skcin has collaborated with a leading advertising agency, launching a unique spoof infomercial (Computertan.com, see below) which has received 2 million hits since it was first aired in February 2009.



To view the infomercial please see www.computertan.com and opt for your free trial.

But what of the future for Skcin?

Having received a clear message from delegates at a UK

Skin Cancer Awareness Forum hosted by the charity in March 2009, Skcin have commissioned a development and marketing strategy which will focus on the need for culture change in UK largely as a result of influencing educationalists particularly those involved with the primary school curriculum. “ The only way to bring about the necessary culture change in this country in regard to over exposure to UV is to engage with education and, whether we like it or not, this can only be achieved through political lobbying. First and foremost we have to educate the politicians of all political persuasions on the subject of the alarming increase in the incidence of skin cancer. Why is skin cancer often referred to as the “ Skinderella “ of all the cancers – simply because it has the lowest profile- and yet it is now the most common form of the disease in the UK ! We have to get the message out and gain the support of the political establishment, “ says Richard Clifford co-founder of the charity.

Skcin have already formed an association with the All Party Parliamentary Group on Skin, the group, who in their most recent report (November 2008) called for “ a new brand for skin cancer in the UK. “

Like any other charity, in order to ensure further development, Skcin rely on funding and in October the charity will be aiming high when a team of eight will be climbing Mount Kilimanjaro in just five days in aid of the charity. To find out more and sponsor the team please visit <http://www.justgiving.com/Kilimanjaro-skcin/> and the Skcin website www.skcin.org.uk.



Annual Evidence Updates on Eczema and Psoriasis

NHS Evidence-skin disorders (formerly the NLH Skin Disorders Specialist Library) held an Annual Evidence Update on w/c 14th September on eczema. Aimed at NHS health professionals to highlight sources of information and guidance on eczema and its treatment, this excellent resource can still be accessed via the homepage www.library.nhs.uk/skin. The Annual Evidence Update on psoriasis, with similar resources, will be held w/c 2nd Nov.



News on the Vitiligo Survey

We are delighted to announce that Dr Viktoria Eleftheriadou (pictured left) has taken over as the Research Associate co-ordinating the vitiligo research prioritisation project which has been funded as part of the SPRUSD NIHR programme grant. Viktoria joins us from Stafford Hospital, where she was a CT2 and is undertaking the research as a PhD with plans for a future career in clinical dermatology research.

The collection of uncertainties about the treatment of vitiligo from patients and health care professionals has now been completed, and we had a fantastic response with 456 surveys completed in total, 149 of which were from clinicians. This has given rise to 690 treatment uncertainties about vitiligo which are now being assessed as potential research suggestions. These will then be fed into the next stage of the project, which in collaboration with the James Lind Alliance and the Vitiligo Society will produce a top ten list of research questions to be considered for feasibility studies. A huge thank you to all those UK DCTN members who responded to this survey.

To find out more about the project, which was originally suggested as a research question to the UK DCTN in 2007 by Maxine Whitton, please go to the website www.vitiligostudy.org.uk. If you're interested in getting more involved in this project please contact Viktoria on 0115 8468633 or viktoria.eleftheriadou@nottingham.ac.uk.

Updating your Good Clinical Practice (GCP) Training

If you need to update your GCP training please remember that as a member of the UK DCTN you can do this free of charge via the NIHR Clinical Research Network (CRN) training programme. The easiest way to update your GCP is the on-line course, which takes approx 3 hours to complete and needs to be completed within 3 months of starting the course. For details of this and other NIHR CRN courses please visit www.crnc.nihr.ac.uk/index/training.html. The booking system for all NIHR CRN courses has recently been over hauled to make it more user friendly and a user guide is available on the website.

Potential Study on Isotretinoin and Depression

At the beginning of the summer, the Network was approached by the Medicines for Children Research Network (MCRN) for help with the design of a study investigating a pharmacogenetic link between isotretinoin treatment for acne and depression in teenagers. The study team based at The University of Liverpool and led by NHS Chair of Pharmacogenetics Professor Pirmohamed (pictured right) and co-ordinated by Dr Dan Hawcutt are extremely pleased with the response they've received from UK DCTN members, with over 40 responding that they would be interested in getting involved in helping to develop the study which is a fantastic response.



An initial meeting between pharmacologists, dermatologists, psychiatrists and patient support groups to discuss potential study ideas is being held at the MRC headquarters on Weds 11th November. If you are interested in receiving a survey to help with the study design or would like to attend the meeting and haven't as yet let us know, please contact the Network Manager Carron Layfield before this date. Thank you to all those members who have responded so far, as such feedback is invaluable to the trial development process.



Trials in Development Update



- **Trimethoprim for wound healing in patients with epidermolysis bullosa (TREBL)**

The study team, led by Dr Jemima Mellerio of the St Johns Institute London, have recently been awarded £2,000 from the UK DCTN pump priming funds to carry out some focus group work with EB patients and carers. This will help inform the design of the full RCT before a grant submission is made to the HTA next year.

- **Study comparing the use of clobetasol propionate and tacrolimus for the treatment of erosive lichen planus (ELP)**

Unfortunately an application to the National Lottery Fund via the BSF for a grant to support a retrospective case note review, a survey of centres to assess their willingness to participate in the study and focus group work with ELP patients was unsuccessful. We are now looking for alternative funding sources for this project headed by Dr Ruth Murphy of QMC, Nottingham.

- **Merkel cell carcinoma study**

This phase II study, investigating the use of adjuvant systematic therapy to improve survival times of patients with merkel cell carcinoma will be adopted by the UK DCTN when funding for the project is obtained. The project has recently been turned down by the MRC EME programme and the study team (headed by Dr Neil Stevens, University of Birmingham) are resubmitting to the RfPB programme in December, and also exploring the potential of a European wide study.

- **Does early aggressive treatment of acne affect severity in later life?**

This study suggestion has been approved by the trial generation and prioritisation panel and will be presented to the UK DCTN Steering Committee at the October meeting. The study is being taken forward by Dr Alison Layton (Harrogate District Hospital) and Professor Tony Avery (Professor of Primary Care, University of Nottingham).

- **Does wearing silk clothing (Dermasilk™) reduce the severity of disease in children with atopic eczema?**

Proposed by Dr Kim Thomas (University of Nottingham), this trial idea has been approved by the trial generation and prioritisation panel and will be presented to the UK DCTN Steering Committee at the October meeting.

Dates for your Diary

Mon 19th Oct	Steering Committee Meeting	1.30pm	BAD House London
Mon 19th Oct	Executive Committee Meeting	3.30pm	BAD House London
Fri 23rd Oct	Closing Dates for SpR Fellowship and Nursing Prize Award		
Mon 25th Jan 2010	BLISTER /STOP GAP Investigators Meeting		Nottingham
Thurs 13th May 2010	Annual Evidence Based Update Meeting (Eczema)		Holywell Park Loughborough

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