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UK DCTNs 500th Member

We are delighted to announce the Network has just recruited its 500th member, Dr Saleem Taibjee. Dr Taibjee is a Consultant Dermatologist based at Birmingham Childrens' Hospital and University Hospital Birmingham. He joined the Network in April and is involved as a co-investigator in the STOP GAP trial. As a token of appreciation to mark the event, Dr Taibjee was invited to attend the Annual Evidence Based Update Meeting on Urticaria, which was held on 14th May. He can be seen (pictured right) receiving his certificate of membership from Network Chair Professor Hywel Williams on the day.



Network membership now stands at over 520 members, an increase of over 40% in the past 12 months which demonstrates the continued interest in independent clinical research from the dermatology community. Over 60% of UK DCTN members are secondary care clinicians, and we are beginning to see the breadth of membership widening, with increasing numbers of nurses, consumers and primary healthcare professionals becoming involved.

BAD Annual Meeting

There are a number of presentations and meetings involving UK DCTN activities at the BAD Annual Meeting being held in Glasgow at the SECC 7th-10th July. Please see the list below for details and come and visit us on our stand in the Exhibition Hall (PSG 16) to catch up with co-ordinating staff and the BLISTER and STOP GAP trial managers.

- Weds 8th July 2.25pm Scientific Session (O-09, Clyde Room) ***Management of pyoderma gangrenosum by UK dermatologists: a pilot study to inform a trial*** Dr Fiona Craig
- Thurs 9th July 9.00am Professors and Registrars Forum (PRO1, Clyde Room) ***Update on the Clinical Trials Network*** Professor Hywel Williams
- Thurs 9th July 17.00 UK DCTN Annual General Meeting (Ness Room) to include presentation of the vignette '***Can statins be used to treat psoriasis***' Katherine Finucane

Annual Evidence Based Update Meeting on Urticaria

The above meeting was recently held at Holywell Park, Loughborough. Over 100 delegates attended this one day event, and feedback for all aspects of the meeting was universally high. Over 50% of those attending reported that they would be changing their clinical practice following the meeting. Presentations from the day from speakers including Malcolm Greaves, James Ferguson and Clive Grattan can be found on the UK DCTN website at www.ukdctn.org/meetings/evidence/urticaria.

On-going Trials Update



Prophylactic Antibiotics
for the Treatment of
Cellulitis at Home

www.patchtrial.co.uk

Following a recent publicity drive in the Trent region for the PATCH I study, including advertisements in the local press and a radio interview with Hywel Williams, there has been a marked increase in participants recruited. 26 patients have been recruited in the past 3 months bringing the total to 168. Similar advertisements are now being placed in Cumbria, Newbury, Brighton and Lincolnshire and a radio interview was recently held in Suffolk. A final push is still needed, as a further 92 patients are needed to recruit the final total of 260 participants by the end of this year. If you are a PATCH recruiting centre and would be interested in a local publicity drive to help with recruitment, please contact the trial manager Kath Foster. Don't be concerned that this would cause too much extra work, as the PATCH trial manager and administrator will be more than happy to deal with the initial enquiries generated.



www.blistertrial.co.uk

We are delighted to announce that following on from the recruitment of the first patient into the BLISTER study by Dr Emma Veysey in Swansea, 7 patients have now been recruited into this trial. This is excellent progress and is most encouraging for all 47 centres involved (27 are open for recruitment 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. Caroline will be on the UK DCTN Exhibition stand at the BAD Annual Meeting (see front page for details).



The STOP GAP study is now open for recruitment. The first centre has been opened at Kings Mill Hospital in Mansfield, with Dr Jane Ravenscroft as the Principal Investigator and the first patient has now been recruited at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Woolwich, London. There are now 49 centres for this study comparing the use of ciclosporin to prednisolone for the treatment of pyoderma gangrenosum. If you are interested in finding out more, please contact the trial manager Eleanor Mitchell who will also be on the UK DCTN Exhibition stand at the BAD Annual Meeting. The results from the STOP GAP pilot study will be presented during a Scientific Session at the BAD meeting (see front page for details).



www.swet-trial.co.uk

This adopted study, investigating the use of water softeners as a treatment for severe childhood eczema in hard water areas, has now closed for recruitment. The target of 310 patients was reached in April 2009 and it is hoped that the results of the study will be available by May 2010.

West Midlands (South) Makes Dermatology a Research Priority

Following feedback from the Comprehensive Local Research Network (CLRN) management team in West Midlands South, we are pleased to announce that dermatology has been made a research priority in this area. The local lead is Dr Andrew Ilchyshyn, a Consultant Dermatologist based at University Hospital Coventry and a BLISTER investigator. This brings the total number of CLRNs in England who have identified dermatology as a research priority to 15 out of 25. If you are interested in finding out more about CLRNs and related funding, then please contact Carron Layfield.

Generating Ideas for Trials: Methods Used by the Trial Generation and Prioritisation Panel

You may recall from previous newsletters that the UK DCTN has set up a Trial Generation and Prioritisation Panel (TGPP) which is chaired by Dr Ibrahim Nasr. The TGPP is now well established and has been busy assessing the increased number of vignettes that have recently been submitted to the Network. We now have 17 studies at various stages of development through the Network and a big thank you to those members who have recently submitted their research ideas. This new system of assessing trial ideas before their presentation to the Steering Committee is working well, and has generated some invaluable feedback for the authors.

In addition to this, the TGPP has looked at how research ideas could be generated at a local level and then submitted for further development through the Network. Out of a number of methods originally suggested by various panel members, including a consultation research diary, discussion at journal/research clubs, local educational meetings and the use of departmental 'good ideas' noticeboards, it was decided to focus on two areas: journal clubs and local educational meetings. Both of these methods have been piloted in the Trent region.

Dr Carsten Flohr (pictured right) has been responsible for taking the lead with regards to collecting research ideas via journal club meetings in the Dermatology Department at Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham.



To date ideas discussed have included uncertainties in vitiligo treatments, the use of propranolol in treating infantile haemangioma and the potential for a study to investigate conclusively whether isotretinoin causes depression. From this experience, it seems that journal clubs can provide an excellent informal forum to identify research gaps, and the TGPP invite you all to try the same in your departments. For information on how to submit any resulting ideas, please contact Carron Layfield or go to www.ukdctn.org/submit/.

Dr Ruth Murphy has taken the lead with regards to using local educational meetings as a source of research ideas. A recent Trent SpR regional training day was arranged with registrars from Sheffield, Nottingham and Leicester being asked to prepare a vignette in advance and then present it on the day as if it were being presented to the UK DCTN Steering Committee. Members of the UK DCTN co-ordinating centre, including Hywel Williams, were on hand to assist with the discussions.

The Nottingham group presented a study investigating the use of increasing doses of antihistamines to treat urticaria, the Sheffield group a proposal for a study looking at female pattern hair loss and the Leicester group a potential study of granuloma faciale. All participating SpRs agreed that it was a very worthwhile experience and the groups have been encouraged to formally submit their vignettes to the UK DCTN.

If you are interested in finding out more about the work of the TGPP, or would like further details on how to set up an educational meeting to generate research ideas, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact Carron Layfield for this information.

Staff Changes at UK DCTN Co-ordinating Centre

After just over 4 years in post, Dr Joanne Chalmers (pictured right) is hanging up her hat as UK DCTN Senior Trials Manager. We really will be sorry to lose Jo, who has decided that she wants to become more involved in a single disease topic area. As such, she has taken up the post of Research Fellow for the eczema prevention work stream of the Centre of Evidence Based Dermatology's NIHR Programme Grant. Jo has been central to the UK DCTN in securing funding for a number of studies in recent years, and I'm sure that all Network members will join us in wishing her well in her new role.



For the foreseeable future, Jo will continue to work for half a day a week on those studies already given a green light in the UK DCTN trial development process, i.e. the epidermolysis bullosa and erosive lichen planus studies. Department of Health funding for the Network co-ordinating centre staff is coming to an end and as such, we cannot replace this position immediately. This does of course mean that the intensive support that the UK DCTN can offer with regards to the development of trial ideas will be limited over the next 12 months. We will still be able to accept ideas for development into the Network and help out with regards to feedback via the TGPP, surveys etc but will encourage clinicians to work with their local Clinical Trials Units with regards to aspects such as funding applications and protocol development until a long term funding source for the position can be identified.

Annual Evidence Update on Skin Cancer

NHS Evidence-skin disorders (formerly the NLH Skin Disorders Specialist Library) held an Annual Evidence Update on skin cancer w/c 11th May. Timed to coincide with the BAD Sun Awareness week, this update is aimed at NHS professionals to highlight sources of information and guidance on skin cancer and its treatment. This excellent resource can still be accessed via the NHS Evidence-skin disorders homepage on www.library.nhs.uk/skin

Dates for your Diary

Thurs 9th July	TGPP meeting	3.30pm	BAD Annual Meeting, SCC Glasgow (Morar Room)
Thurs 9th July	AGM and Steering Committee Meeting	5.00pm	BAD Annual Meeting, SCC Glasgow (Ness Room)
Mon 19th Oct	Steering Committee Meeting	1.30pm	BAD House London
Mon 19th Oct	Executive Committee Meeting	3.30pm	BAD House London

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