

UKRG INITIATIVES

New chair!

Paul Maltby will assume the chair of the UK Radiopharmacy Group, taking over from Bev Ellis. **Maria Palmer** will be chair of the radiopharmacy section of the BNMS. Jilly Croasdale remains secretary of the UKRG.

The committee would like to express its thanks to **Bev Ellis** for her excellent leadership over the last few years as chair of both the UKRG and the radiopharmacy section of BNMS.

Postgraduate Course in Radiopharmacy

The annual postgraduate course in radiopharmacy, sometimes known as the Easter course, was held 13-16 March at King's College London. Attendance as good with 11 from the MSc in Nuclear Medicine, 4 from PTQA, and 17 from nuclear medicine departments and research units. Two of the registrants were from outside the UK (Ireland and Norway).

My profound apologies to the attendees. I was unforgivably tardy in sending out the certificates of attendance. It it's any consolation, I was almost as slow in paying the speakers, and then I paid them the wrong amount!

The next running of the course will likely be in March 2007. I hope it will be properly resourced and things will happen in a timely manner.

Radiopharmacy audit

A subcommittee has met to discuss ways of updating and broadening the audit document. We intend to finish this revision at our summer meeting and post the revised document shortly thereafter.

Radiopharmacy handbook

Revision of the UKRG Radiopharmacy Handbook (available on the website) is also underway. It is hoped that the revised Handbook will appear in the next few months.

Survey of clinical activities

What clinical activities are you involved in? Would you like to become more involved? What are other people doing? We'd like to answer all these questions, but in order to do so we need input from everyone. A survey devised by Sanjay Patel (Guy's) and Jilly Croasdale (City Hospital Birmingham) is being distributed again with this Newsletter. If it doesn't come with the Newsletter you can contact Sanjay for a copy (sanjay.patel@gstt.nhs.uk). Please give us your input.

Radiopharmacy workshop

The Bournville meeting will be held on Friday 12 January 2007. Reserve that date!

WORKFORCE ISSUES

Training staff for PET/CT

The BNMS is preparing a document on training of the different craft groups required to support the expansion of PET/CT in the UK. The UKRG has input in this process. This document will be a companion to the Intercollegiate Report on PET/CT issued in August 2005, in which provision of an adequate supply of suitably trained staff was identified as a major limitation.

An advisory board has been set up to oversee the rollout of PET/CT in the UK. The UKRG has representation in the form of Bev Ellis. Training and registration of radiochemists and technologists for PET is a major problem.

REGULATORY ISSUES

ARSAC Notes for Guidance

The newest edition of the ARSAC Notes for Guidance was issued in March. However, there are a number of typos in some of the tables, particularly

the effective dose and dose to the uterus in Appendix I for instances where there are SPECT doses. These errors have been corrected in the electronic version which is accessible at www.arsac.org.uk.

⁵¹Cr-EDTA

Discussion continues on the thorny issue of multidose use of ⁵¹Cr-EDTA injection. Two issues were raised at this meeting:

1. EU guidelines state that multidose vials should not normally be used more than 28 days after first puncture. The reference document is CPMP/QWP/159/96 corr, which is available at www.eudra.org/emea.html.
2. Whatever means a radiopharmacy chooses to use, they must be able to present the MHRA with evidence validating the sterility of the product throughout its assigned shelf-life.

PRODUCT NEWS

Sestamibi for parathyroid imaging

The previous issue of the Newsletter presented "Sensible Advice" on preparation of sestamibi for parathyroid imaging, in response to the paper by M Karam *et al* entitled, "Increasing the radiochemical purity of ^{99m}Tc sestamibi commercial preparations results in improved sensitivity of dual-phase planar parathyroid scintigraphy" which appeared in the December 2005 issue of *Nuclear Medicine Communications* (vol 26, no 12, pp 1093-8). The authors reported a relationship between the % impurities in ^{99m}Tc-sestamibi and the parathyroid washout ratio, implying that the radiochemical purity affected the diagnosis.

Since then, two letters to the editor from UKRG members have appeared in the Journal questioning the claims in the paper. The May issue had a letter from Alistair Millar and Tom Murray, and the June issue had one from Maggie Cooper and Jim Ballinger. The main point is that the RCP obtained in the authors' institution was much lower than that generally reported.

There should be no cause for concern about the RCP of sestamibi prepared in the usual manner, though it is wise to back this up with periodic RCP testing.

Schering

Schering is withdrawing from the radiopharmacy market and has sold the CIS Bio division to a

consortium formed by Ion Beam Applications (IBA) and the Institut National des Radioelements (IRE) in Belgium. As of July, the UK distributor will be Qados (www.qados.co.uk).

Mebrofenin

Mebrofenin (Cholediam, formerly Cholecis) will not be part of the CIS divestiture. It will be distributed by Durbin (www.durbin.co.uk). The price has increased significantly.

MEETING REPORTS

British Nuclear Medicine Society 26-29 Mar, Manchester. The keynote speaker was Mathew Thakur who gave an interesting talk on the development of peptidic and nucleic acid based radiopharmaceuticals for use in breast cancer. Disappointingly, two clinicians told me that they felt the talk had too much of a radiopharmacy bent and was not clinical enough.

There was one session of radiopharmacy papers. While the quality was high, the representation was fairly narrow. Discussion ensued as to how to increase interest in this session amongst research groups. Negative factors included the high cost of one day registration. It has also been pointed out that there is relatively little practice based work presented (the same comment applied to the Lucca meeting below). Ideas to enhance the session included a focussed symposium, targeting potential presenters, and co-sponsorship with another organisation such as the Radiochemistry Group of the Royal Society of Chemistry.

European Symposium on Radiopharmacy and Radiopharmaceuticals

30 Mar-2 Apr, Lucca. The UK radiopharmacy community was well represented at Lucca, an ancient walled city near Pisa. While those at home endured miserable weather, the attendees basked in the sunshine of Tuscany (after the sessions, of course).

The programme kicked off on Thursday evening with a whiz-bang presentation from GE on what can be done in terms of combining modalities if you have unlimited funding. The Friday sessions had a focus of PET radiopharmaceuticals and their pharmacology, followed by a session on peptides. There were presentations from Manchester, Barts, and Canterbury. Saturday morning topics were technetium, cell labelling (mainly stem cells), and therapy. This was followed by presentations and a

panel discussion on regulatory issues. The latter was somewhat disappointing, given the scope available. (One of the speakers used a number of my slides, purloined from the EANM web site without attribution!) Discussion was cut short by the need to depart for the conference dinner.

In contrast, the final session on the use of imaging in drug development was much livelier than talks on this subject which have seen previously. All in all, a good symposium, as indicated by this photo of some of the happy UK attendees on the last morning.



7th International Symposium on Technetium in Chemistry and Nuclear Medicine 6-9 Sep, Bressanone. <http://tecnum.dsfarm.unipd.it>

European Association of Nuclear Medicine 30 Sep-4 Oct, Athens. www.eanm.org

9th World Congress of Nuclear Medicine and Biology 22-27 Oct, Soeul. www.wfnmb.org

UPCOMING COURSES

DiMI (Diagnostic Molecular Imaging)

A series of short courses on research techniques in molecular imaging are being held at various locations in Europe as part of the Diagnostic Molecular Imaging (DiMI) network of excellence funded by the 6th framework of the European Commission. www.mpifnf.de/dimix/ (In the previous Newsletter I erroneously attributed these courses to European Molecular Imaging Laboratories (EMIL), which is a parallel network also funded by the EC but with a focus on cancer, where DiMI has a broader mandate in neurology, cardiology, and degenerative/inflammation.)

UPCOMING MEETINGS

British Nuclear Medicine Society 4-5 Sep, Cambridge. www.bnms.org

From the Editor

Apologies again for this issue being several months behind schedule. I will attempt to get back on track over the summer.

www.ukrg.org.uk

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This and previous issues of the Newsletter are available from the UKRG web site and are posted in the library section at www.VirRad.org