

“SENSIBLE ADVICE”

One of the roles of the UK Radiopharmacy Group is to provide “sensible advice” to the nuclear medicine community on issues where many people have raised questions or concerns.

Concern about toxicity of stannous salts in ^{99m}Tc red blood cell labelling

Keen observers have noted that the SPCs for the three pretinning agents licensed in the UK (Amerscan Stannous Agent, TechneScan PYP, and AngioCIS) contain the statement: “Because of the long lasting fixation of stannous salts on red blood cells, it is recommended not to repeat the procedure before 3 months.” This has led to concern about the repeated use of MUGA scans to follow cardiotoxic effects of chemotherapy, which can be required monthly.

The origins of this statement are unclear, though it is significant that the wording is virtually identical for the three products. The statement occurs in the paediatric section of the SPC and it is uncertain whether it specifically refers to children.

However, there is no such statement in the SPCs of similar products in North America, including TechneScan PYP.

Critical evaluation of the literature leads us to conclude:

- It is well recognised that pretinning can affect the biodistribution of ^{99m}Tc-pertechnetate for a number of weeks, but that would not affect a subsequent ^{99m}Tc-red cell study.
- Stannous salts can be toxic in much larger doses than are used in red cell labelling.
- There is no evidence of adverse effects of repeated administration of pretinning agents which have been in use for 30 years.
- We feel that this statement in the SPC should not impede the medically justified repetition of MUGA scans.

UKRG EVENTS

Postgraduate course in radiopharmacy

The next running of the UKRG Easter course at King's College London is scheduled for 10-13 March 2008. For information please contact jim.ballinger@kcl.ac.uk.

BNMS annual meeting 2008

Next year the BNMS congress moves north of Hadrian's Wall to Edinburgh. One of the invited speakers is Phil Blower, talking about Radiopharmaceutical Development. The meeting is later than usual, being held 12-14 May. Let's try to maintain the momentum from last year with a high level of participation in the radiopharmacy stream. The abstract deadline is 11 January.

UKRG INITIATIVES

Sterility testing of radiopharmaceuticals

There are two students in different courses doing projects this year related to sterility testing of radiopharmaceuticals. They would both benefit from a snapshot of how sterility testing is being performed in UK radiopharmacies. Could you please take a few moments to complete and return the accompanying survey? The students and their supervisors at City University and King's College London would appreciate it. Thank you. For further information or a copy of the survey please contact: jim.ballinger@kcl.ac.uk

Error reporting

As announced last year, a form for reporting errors or near misses in radiopharmacy has been devised based on a system developed by the national CIVAS group (www.civas.co.uk). The form is available from paul.maltby@rlbuht.nhs.uk and completed forms are to be returned to him. They will be treated confidentially and reported to the national scheme anonymously.

RADIONUCLIDE THERAPY MEETING

Radionuclide therapy: chemistry and applications

25 September, St Thomas' Hospital, London, 10:00 – 17:00. Sponsored by the radiochemistry group of the Royal Society of Chemistry. RSC members £40, non-members £60, students free. Poster submissions welcome – abstract deadline 27 July. www.kcl.ac.uk/imgsci

Targeted radionuclide therapy is a successful but under-used cancer treatment modality, offering opportunities for design and synthesis of agents incorporating radionuclides from all parts of the periodic table. The aim of this meeting is to bring chemists and radiobiologists together with practitioners of radionuclide therapy including physicians, radiopharmacists and medical physicists to enhance interdisciplinary awareness and identify areas for chemical development that will widen the clinical use and improve efficacy of radionuclide therapy.

Confirmed speakers:

Prof Mike Zalutsky (Duke University, NC, USA)
Prof Steve Mather (Cancer Research UK, London)
Prof Val Lewington (Royal Marsden Hospital, Sutton)
Dr John Buscombe (Royal Free Hospital, London)
Prof Alan Perkins (University of Nottingham)
Prof Jon Dilworth (University of Oxford)
Dr Kim Orchard (Southampton General Hospital)
Prof Rob Mairs (Beatson Institute, Glasgow)

REGULATORY ISSUES

Manufacturing of radiopharmaceuticals for veterinary use

A number of units have been supplying radiopharmaceuticals to veterinary practices under a Specials licence. Under the Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2006, a separate licence is now required for manufacture of radiopharmaceuticals for veterinary use. See www.vmd.gov.uk.

ARSAC news

Newsletter ARSAC now publishes a newsletter which is available on its website www.arsac.org.uk. The newsletter will come out twice a year and will highlight changes in legislation and policies.

Programme Cyclamen, operated jointly by the Home Office and HM Revenue & Customs, involves radiation monitoring at airports and seaports as a counter-terrorism measure. However, nuclear medicine patients can trigger the sensitive radiation

detectors. ARSAC and Revenue & Customs are agreeing on wording of a paragraph which should be inserted in the patient appointment letter and the patient should be advised to carry letter if travelling within a certain period depending on the radionuclide identity and quantity administered.

Administered activity for myocardial perfusion imaging An ARSAC sponsored study has looked at the relationship between administered activity and diagnostic quality of the scan. As a result, ARSAC will be recommending an increase in the DRL for sestamibi and tetrofosmin cardiac studies. This will have implications for radiopharmacy in terms of generator sizes, finger doses, and costs.

Feedback from recent MHRA inspections

Among the issues which appear to be currently "hot" with MHRA inspectors are:

- Limits are required for % failure rates on microbiology results
- Monitoring for contamination of lead pots and other pieces of mobile equipment
- Change control; the example is given of a traffic light system which alerts staff to changed SOPs
- Periodic Quality Review (PQR) of products, as required in Chapter 1 of the Orange Guide
- Process and equipment validation and re-validation

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Director of Radiopharmacy

The Health Sciences Centre, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada delivers a complex mix of patient care, professional education and research programs. The Central Radiopharmacy provides a comprehensive set of products and services to five Winnipeg based Nuclear Medicine Departments and is involved with ongoing research as well as educational activities such as training Nuclear Medicine Residents and Nuclear Medicine Technologists.

We are seeking a leader in the field of Clinical Radiopharmacy or Radiochemistry. You will have the opportunity to reshape the Radiopharmacy based on your vision of best current practice. You will also have the opportunity to share and participate in our growing Nuclear Medicine academic program including collaborating with our outstanding PET/Cyclotron team.

Qualifications:

- PhD in radiopharmacy or radiochemistry with 5 years experience in a clinical radiopharmacy, with at least 2 years in a management capacity, preferably in a centralised radiopharmacy.

- Advanced radiopharmaceutical quality assurance skills. In depth and current working knowledge of the Canadian regulatory framework relative to all aspects of radiopharmaceuticals.
- Demonstrated strategic planning skills. Excellent interpersonal, verbal and written communication skills. Experience with project or program management, program evaluation and budgeting.
- Eligibility for licensure as a pharmacist in the Province of Manitoba, or another acceptable jurisdiction, an asset.

Competition number 95839. Employment Services, 60 Pearl Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, R3E 1X2. Fax (204)787-1376, employment@hsc.mb.ca
For further information please contact the medical director, Dr Sandor Demeter, sdemeter@hsc.mb.ca

Specialist Technician (Radiopharmacy)

Barts & The London NHS Trust; Salary £21,647 - £29,764 pa inc (Band 5); 37 hours per week. Closing date 5 July 2007

We are looking for an enthusiastic and well-motivated specialist Pharmacy or Nuclear Medicine Technologist/Technician to join the Radiopharmacy in this active and prestigious Department of Nuclear Medicine situated in the heart of London. The department is equipped with two dual headed gamma cameras with coincidence PET and integral CT system, a single headed gamma camera, an automatic sample counter, several scintillation probes for sentinel node localisation and a comprehensive Radiopharmacy (two isolator GMP-facility). The service will be extended to incorporate a new PET/CT imaging facility by the end of 2007. There is ample scope for involvement in research and teaching as well.

For further enquiries to arrange for an informal visit, please contact Dr. Neil Hartman at 020 7601 7146 or 020 7601 7144.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

British Nuclear Medicine Society autumn meeting 3-4 September, London.
www.bnms.org.uk

Radionuclide therapy: chemistry and applications 25 September, London. Abstract deadline: 27 July www.kcl.ac.uk/imgsci

European Nuclear Medicine Congress 13-17 October, Copenhagen. www.eanm.org

28th International Symposium on Radioactive Isotopes in Clinical Medicine and Research 9-12 January 2008, Bad Hofgastein.

14th European Symposium on Radiopharmacy and Radiopharmaceuticals 24-27 April, Skopje, Macedonia. Abstract deadline: 21 December.
<http://esrr08.eanm.org>

British Nuclear Medicine Society 36th annual meeting 12-14 May 2008, Edinburgh. Abstract deadline: 11 January. www.bnms.org.uk

UPCOMING COURSES

European Postgraduate Certificate Course in Radiopharmaceutical Chemistry and Radiopharmacy

Module 1, 3-14 September, Frankfurt
Module 2, 4-15 February, Zurich
Module 3, 31 August, Leipzig
www.postgraduate.pharma.ethz.ch

MSc in Radiopharmaceutics and PET Radiochemistry, King's College London. Next intake Sept/Oct 2007. www.kcl.ac.uk/imgsci

www.ukrg.org.uk

Editor: Jim Ballinger
Department of Nuclear Medicine
Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust
St Thomas Street, London, UK, SE1 9RT
Phone: 020 7188 5521; Fax: 020 7188 4094
E-mail: jim.ballinger@kcl.ac.uk

Issue 2007 Q2 Published 29 June 2007

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