

NCCN Collaborates with AVEO and Astellas on Innovative Cancer Research

The NCCN Oncology Research Program (ORP) today announced that it has entered into a collaboration with AVEO Pharmaceuticals, Inc. and Astellas Pharma Inc. to develop oncology research protocols and trials examining tivozanib as a single agent and in combination with other drugs and biologics in the treatment of solid tumors. Tivozanib is a potent, selective, long half-life inhibitor of all 3 vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) receptors. The VEGF pathway plays a distinct role in angiogenesis, which is critical in the growth and survival of solid tumors. Positive top-line results from a phase III clinical study in advanced renal cell carcinoma have been reported, and the drug is also being evaluated in other tumors.

“NCCN’s mission is to improve cancer care by facilitating research collaborations to study and evaluate new and promising treatments,” said Diane Paul, MS, RN, Vice President, NCCN ORP. “Grant support from AVEO and Astellas will fund clinical research in different types of solid tumors designed and carried out by investigators at NCCN Member Institutions—research that may identify treatment advances that can improve both survival and quality of life for patients with difficult-to-treat cancers.”

The NCCN ORP supports and approves studies modeled after NIH’s peer-review process, drawing on the expertise of investigators at NCCN Member Institutions to facilitate all phases of clinical research. This research is made possible by collaborations with pharmaceutical and biotech companies in order to advance therapeutic options for patients with cancer. To date, this successful research model has received more than \$34 million in research grants, and provided 86 investigators with funding for clinical and correlative trials that have produced numerous publications in peer-reviewed journals.

“We, as well as our collaborators at Astellas, are thrilled to have the opportunity to collaborate with NCCN to further advance our understanding of tivozanib through clinical research,” said William Slichenmyer, MD, ScM, Chief Medical Officer, AVEO. “We thank NCCN for their partnership on this effort and look forward to working with NCCN Member Institutions and the greater scientific community to advance our goal of improving cancer patients’ lives.”

An Update on NCCN/NBGH Initiative to Develop Evidence-Based Cancer Treatment Recommendations

In December 2010, NCCN announced its collaboration with the National Business Group on Health to develop *An Employer’s Guide to Cancer Treatment & Prevention*. The guide will address issues related to cancer across the continuum of care, including prevention and wellness; medical, pharmacy and behavioral health benefits; employee assistance programs; and disability and family medical leave. Recommendations are supported by evidence and knowledge from a wide range of experts. Therefore, employers that use the guide can be confident that their benefit dollars for cancer are being invested wisely and will meet the needs of employees and their dependents.

Several tools are now available:

- Executive Summary
- Tool 1: Quick Reference Guide and Assessment Tool
- Tool 2: Benefit Design and Assessment Tool
- Tool 3, part I: Request for Proposal (RFP) Questions and Requested Evidence for Vendors
- Tool 3, part II: Request for Proposal (RFP) and Response Evaluation for Employers
- Tool 3, part III: RFP and Vendor Scoring

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The companion RFP Scoring Tool (Tool 3, part III), Vendor Contracting resource (Tool 4) and Evaluation and Plan Reporting Tool (Tool 5) will also be available later this month. In addition, a Summary Plan Description (SPD) resource will be posted in the near term.

The Benefit Design and Assessment Tool, RFP Tools, and Vendor Contracting and SPD Resources all focus on medical, pharmacy, and behavioral health benefits. They provide specific recommendations, objectives, suggestions for coverage and employee cost-sharing, as well as “administrative guidance” to put each recommendation into context. Recommendations incorporate evidence-based clinical information from the NCCN Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology (NCCN Guidelines), when applicable, and from other sources. RFP Tools are intended to simplify the process for employers and benefit consultants to obtain information from vendors, determine which vendors are most capable of implementing the benefits according to the employer’s specifications, and then rating and ranking vendor responses.

The second year of this project focuses on “absence-related” benefits, such as short- and long-term disability, Family Medical Leave and incidental absences, as well as Employee Assistance Program capabilities and caregiver needs. Work related to support resources for employees dealing with their own or a loved one’s cancer risk or diagnosis will begin later this year and continue into 2013.

The collaboration between NCCN and the National Business Group on Health represents an opportunity to have a powerful impact. This project will raise the bar for employer-sponsored benefits, make a tangible difference for people with cancer and their families, and increase the value of benefit expenditures for employers.

New NCCN Guideline Translations Now Available

NCCN is pleased to announce the recent translations of the NCCN Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology (NCCN Guidelines) for Multiple Myeloma, Non-Hodgkin’s Lymphomas, and Prostate Cancer into Chinese, Portuguese, South Korean, and Spanish. This series of translations furthers NCCN’s mission of improving cancer care by ensuring patients have access to the standard of care regardless of language barriers. These efforts represent NCCN’s commitment to further expanding its reach to non-English-speaking clinicians, patients, and caregivers.

Translations of several other NCCN Guidelines are available in Chinese, Japanese, South Korean, Spanish, and Portuguese. Additionally, adaptations of NCCN Guidelines are available for use in Asia, China, the Middle East and North Africa region, and the Republic of South Korea. To access these resources, or to learn more about NCCN international initiatives, please visit NCCN.org.

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