

GEM Meeting in Copenhagen - May 26-28, 2008

Monday, May 26

Welcome by Director of Bispebjerg Hospital. Introductions and schedule Marianne Berwick, Elisabeth Thieden and Hans Christian Wulf

Loraine Marrett – Discussion of Sunbed Analyses: Loraine indicated that the analyses had not actually changed much since our review last year. She is preparing a paper for distribution to the team. Slides on the website.

Discussion of Final Data Analysis Needs: Marianne Berwick & Susan Paine
Marianne and Susan discussed the need to have final data to Susan by April 1, 2009. This will require different types of effort from different groups, based on the timing for obtaining complete vital status data, including cause of death. In addition, the centers who are able will obtain information on subsequent melanoma primaries.

Melissa Gonzales and BER analyses: Melissa showed very preliminary analyses and excellent quality control for genotyping. She will continue to analyze the data and create occupational sun exposure variables, starting with those created for Dr. Kricke's 2007 paper.

Colin Begg presented the Clonality study which demonstrates that most second primaries are unlikely to be the result of clonal expansion from the first primary. This paper has been circulated and will be submitted soon. (Draft on website)

Nancy Thomas presented clear and elegant analyses of predictors of solar elastosis among the GEM "controls" for whom we had that element reviewed. She will circulate a draft shortly. (Tables on web)

Ruth Walter presented an update on COE analyses of the epidermis as a new histological diagnostic characteristic. She will be writing a paper on this. (presentation on the web)
Anne Kricke presented the results of additional interaction studies (*MC1R*, Nevi and sun exposure). In our data nevi, were independent of *MC1R*

Nancy Thomas also gave an update on BRAF mutation study

Tuesday, May 27

Colin Begg provided an update on the Case-control analyses of VDR SNPs and interaction analyses (on website)

Marianne Berwick described two early studies, an R21 to re-sequence Chr 6 and a pilot study of siRNA study currently using ineligible GEM samples.

Bruce Armstrong updated the group about a newly-funded Australian study of the UV-and Vitamin D relationship at 4 latitudes in Australia

Peter Philipsen from the Bispebjerg Hospital discussed his work using Raman spectroscopy – a non-invasive tool to try to discriminate melanoma suspicious nevi from malignant melanoma. This is a promising approach, but is not quite sensitive and specific enough as yet.

Jakob Heydenreich from the Bispebjerg Hospital showed the personal, electronic UV dosimeters As well as new versions with new possibilities for actually collecting questionnaire type data "real time".

Morten Bogh and Elisabeth Thieden presented ongoing studies about the relationship between cutaneous vitamin D synthesis and different known UV doses. (Website)

Wednesday, May 28, 2008

The meeting began with a presentation by Isis Mikhail (on private website) to list the grant opportunities available. Several were particularly salient for the GEM team: Multiple PI grants, linked R0-1's, some specific RFA's, SBIR's.

Nancy Thomas reported on a recent paper in JID showing that individuals diagnosed with melanoma on the scalp and neck were much more likely to die of their cancer than those with tumors on other sites. Truncal tumors also had a poor prognosis.

Stefano Rosso brought up critical concerns about follow up of GEM patients, specifically in terms of ascertaining cause of death. Death certificates are notorious for the potential for unreliability. In order to avoid this problem, we will ask each center for their method of

determining cause of death (although it is likely that International coding rules are used), we may conduct some limited reliability studies in each (or selected) center, and we will also follow subjects for development of new cancers including new melanomas.

Rona Mackie presented an overview of the Scottish Melanoma Group's data. Descriptive data – such as that presented by Nancy Thomas and Rona Mackie – was extremely interesting in terms of trends over time.

A discussion was had about new grants. Ideas focused on CURRENT GEM data and DNA and a NEW study. One suggestion was to conduct a randomized trial of vitamin D in melanoma progression. We did not have time to develop this idea, but there was a great deal of enthusiasm about it. Other ideas will be circulated shortly.

Dates for the next meeting and venue were not discussed, but informal discussion focused on a **GEM meeting in early December in Albuquerque**. As we are entering a critical phase for our 10 year study, it was generally felt that we should meet a bit more frequently. A “poll” will be taken to see how best to make this happen.

Thank you all!