

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

International Blood specialists debate on new drugs in haematology and ways to facilitate patients' access to innovation and high quality care at an affordable cost

Istanbul, 23 March 2015 - The EBMT (European Society for Blood and Marrow Transplantation) will dedicate a special session Wednesday 25 March 2015 including hot topics on innovations in cancer and access to novel anti-cancer drugs. This session organized in collaboration with EHA (European Hematology Association) and APBMT (Asia Pacific Blood and Marrow Transplantation Group), will take place during the 41st EBMT Annual Meeting that will welcome more than 4,500 delegates in the host city of Istanbul, Turkey.

Hematopoietic cancers represent the fifth most commonly occurring cancers and the second leading cause of cancer death.¹ In 2014, an estimated 52,380 new cases of leukemia were diagnosed, and 24,090 deaths will be attributable to leukemia of all types.²

In a context of personalised medicine and individualised cancer therapy, haematological diseases are benefiting from a constant evolution of therapies and continued improvement in survival since the introduction of many novel agents. The cure rate of many deadly diseases such as lymphoma or chronic myeloid leukemia has dramatically increased over the last 10 years.

Nowadays, the combination of new targeted drugs and stem cell transplantation is being increasingly considered in different blood malignancies. Such approach aims to exploit both the potential activity of the drug against the underlying disease, while harnessing the immune system which has the capacity to eradicate malignancies over the long term. With this background, the EBMT actively works towards the validation of the use of novel drugs in combination with bone marrow transplant.

Moreover, during this session, a question will be raised on how to tackle the relatively high cancer drug prices while rewarding innovation and allowing fair and affordable access to all patients who are in need.

Access to curative novel treatment approaches with or without stem cell transplantation should be on the top list of priorities of all health decision-makers and stake holders. Professor Mohamad Mohty from the Saint-Antoine Hospital in Paris and President of the EBMT argues that "The financial difficulties should not represent a barrier when fighting against cancer. The EBMT is dedicated to meet and tackle the different challenges in partnership with authorities, pharmaceutical companies, patients' advocacy groups, and other interested stakeholders with the ultimate goal to improve patients' care and wider and rapid access to innovation".

To tackle this issue, EBMT is committed to work hand in hand along with other professional organisations to develop appropriate guidelines that will help policy makers to take the right decisions for the benefit of patients and their relatives.

¹ Insight Pharma Report

² <http://www.cancernetwork.com/cancer-management/acute-leukemias>



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About the European society for Blood and Marrow Transplantation (EBMT)

The EBMT is a non-profit organisation that was established in 1974 in order to allow scientists and physicians involved in clinical bone marrow transplantation to share their experience and develop co-operative studies. The EBMT aims to promote all aspects associated with the transplantation of haematopoietic stem cells from all donor sources and donor types including basic and clinical research, education, standardisation, quality control, and accreditation for transplant procedures.

The EBMT organises every year an Annual Meeting at the beginning of April. It brings together over 4,500 scientists, physicians, nurses, statisticians, data managers, biologists, technicians and patients and remains an important moment to ensure and encourage exchange, education and scientific productivity in order to improve upon what has been built over the years.

For further information about the EBMT, please visit the website: www.ebmt.org and follow us on Twitter: @TheEBMT and #EBMT15

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