

Advances in the Management of Pancreatic Cancer: Clinical Controversies and Opportunities to Optimize Outcomes

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Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this educational activity, participants should be better able to:

- Understand the genetic and molecular basis of pancreatic cancer
- Explain the rationale for the development and use of new therapeutic approaches in pancreatic cancer
- Discuss the clinical implications of pivotal clinical trials involving novel therapies in pancreatic cancer
- Analyze future treatment strategies and clinical trials needed to advance therapeutic progress in pancreatic cancer

For the first time in its history, progress is being made in the management of pancreatic cancer. Although it continues to pose an enormous challenge to clinicians as the most lethal of the common cancers, recent advances in the approach and management of pancreatic cancer has provided increasing 5-year survival rates for patients with early stage disease and a more refined approach to managing and palliating advanced disease. In the United States, approximately 37,000 people are diagnosed with pancreatic cancer each year. Due to the lethality of the disease, the number of deaths expected each year mirrors that of its incidence and as such, pancreatic cancer ranks as the fourth leading cause of cancer death in the United States. Worldwide, pancreatic cancer ranks eighth in cancer death rate, while only thirteenth in incidence. The highest incidence rate is in black males within the United States at approximately 13 cases per 100,000 persons per year.

In spite of the acceptance of gemcitabine by most as a standard first-line agent for the treatment of advanced pancreatic cancer, novel therapies and combinations are urgently needed as this disease has one of the lowest survival rates of all cancers. The growing understanding of the molecular basis of pancreatic cancer as well as the recent introduction of targeted therapeutic agents has prompted studies of novel agents that have the potential to improve on existing treatments. Although incremental progress has been made in the treatment of pancreatic cancer, new drugs and approaches are critically needed as there are no standards currently accepted for treatment of this disease and prognosis remains very disappointing overall.

This program is a continuing education (CE) initiative that will be implemented March – December 2009. A CE program serves to maintain, develop, or increase the knowledge, skills, and professional performance and relationships that healthcare professionals use to provide services for their patients.

This initiative has been planned and will be implemented in accordance with the Essential Areas and policies of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) and the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE). ECG is an ACCME and ACPE accredited provider.

If you are interested in hosting this educational program at your institution, please visit www.educationalconcepts.net and click on *Request a Program*. If you have any questions or need additional information please contact Chloè Ingram at Educational Concepts Group, LLC today at 1.770.933.2055 or via e-mail at cingram@educationalconcepts.net.

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