Clinical Research Newsletter
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LAMBDA

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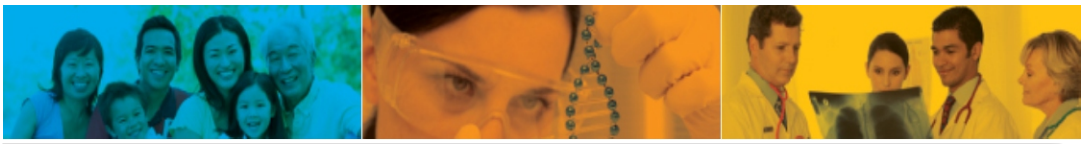

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GLOBAL NEWS

1.1. Japan develops 30-minute test to detect Ebola virus disease

Sep 03, 2014

- Researchers from the Nagasaki University in Japan, in collaboration with Eiken Chemical, have developed a new method to detect the presence of the Ebola virus in just 30 minutes.
- Researchers have developed a substance called a primer that increases only those genes specific to the Ebola virus found in a blood sample or other bodily fluid. DNA specific to the virus, if present, will be shown within 30 minutes.
- Currently, the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) method is used to detect the Ebola virus. In PCR, doctors heat and cool samples repeatedly to amplify the DNA of the virus and the procedure takes upto two hours.

1.2. Pfizer to promote two Novartis' COPD drugs in UK

Sep 04, 2014

- UK's Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) patients will be cheered by the news that Pfizer has signed a deal to promote two new drugs developed by Novartis. The therapies in question are Seebri (glycopyrronium) and Ultibro (indacaterol/glycopyrronium) delivered through Novartis' Breezhaler device.
- While Seebri® Breezhaler® has been available in the UK market since November 2012, Ultibro® Breezhaler® has a European licence but has not yet been launched in the UK. Following this agreement, Pfizer plans to make Ultibro® Breezhaler® available in the UK in due course.
- Novartis will continue to be responsible for the manufacture, sales and distribution of both medicines, in addition to regulatory, pharmacovigilance and medical information commitments.

1.3. Novartis admits hiding thousands of serious Glivec, Tasigna side effects

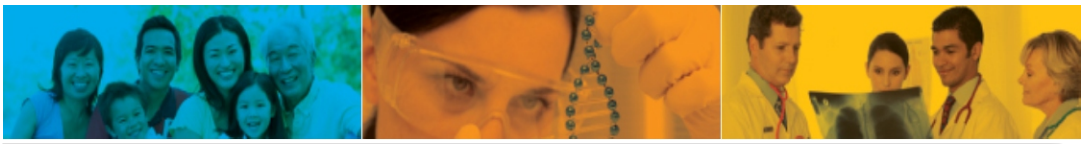
Sep 02, 2014

- Novartis Japan has confessed to having hidden 2,579 serious side effects cases relating to its cancer drugs Glivec (imatinib), Tasigna (nilotinib) and Afinitor (everolimus), including a fatality.
- Marketing employees at the firm were aware of the side effect cases but failed to report them to Japan's Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry. Of the total, 1,313 cases related to Glivec, 514 to Tasigna and 261 to Afinitor. Novartis did not respond to questioning on how and why its staff behaved like this, but a report in The Japan News said that the employees were not aware of the seriousness of the problem and lacked proper supervision.
- The 2,579 serious cases make up part of 8,697 side effects cases which the company failed to report overall.

1.4. NICE to seek greater access to clinical trial data when appraising drugs

Sep 07, 2014

- The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) plans to seek access to clinical trial data from European regulators if drug companies fail to supply relevant information, according to an updated process guide for developing technology appraisal recommendations.
- In a new update to its process guide for developing technology appraisal recommendations, NICE has strengthened the chapter on declarations to ensure that medical doctors sign a declaration when they make submissions to the Institute stating that they have identified all clinical trial data. NICE will only approach the European regulatory authorities if the pharmaceutical company has not provided the necessary clinical data.



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DOMESTIC NEWS

2.1. R&D expenditure of 25 Indian pharma cos surges by 20.6% in 2013-14 Sep 29, 2014

- The Research and Development (R&D) spending of 25 leading Indian pharmaceutical companies increased by 20.6 per cent during the year 2013-14. With higher R&D investments, Indian companies secured 81 ANDA approvals from US FDA during the first eight months, i.e. January-August of 2014 enabling them to introduce several new products with exclusivity rights in regulated markets. Sun Pharmaceutical and its subsidiaries, viz, Caraco Pharma and Taro Pharma, secured 14 ANDA approvals from US FDA, followed by Cadila (Zydus) Healthcare Ltd. claiming 11, Lupin to bag 9 and Strides Arcolab to achieve 6 approvals to name a few. Similarly, Aurobindo Pharma, DRL, Emcure Pharma and Macleods Pharma got 5 ANDA approvals each during the period. Indian Pharma companies received US FDA approval for total 400 ANDAs during the year 2013 as against 476 in the previous year.

2.2. ICMR issues draft consensus document for management of larynx & hypopharynx cancers

Sep 30, 2014

- The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has issued the draft consensus document for management of larynx and hypopharynx cancers. The document provides details about how to manage laryngeal and hypopharyngeal cancers such as diagnostic work up, staging, treatment, stage-wise treatment and consensus statement on practice.
- The ICMR has invited suggestions and comments from stakeholders on the draft document before November 26, 2014.

REGULATORY NEWS

3.1. Health ministry to re-examine issue of allowing trial in hospitals with less than 50 beds

Sep 01, 2014

- The Union health ministry will soon constitute an expert committee comprising of experts from various therapeutic areas to re-examine the issue as to whether clinical trials can be allowed to be conducted in hospitals having less than 50 beds with or without emergency facilities.
- A recommendation to this effect was given by the apex committee on clinical trials which was constituted by the Union health ministry in April this year on the directive of the Supreme Court to monitor the clinical trial sector in the country.

3.2. Health ministry considering clinical trial waiver for two cancer drugs Sep 02, 2014

- The Union health ministry is considering a proposal for providing local clinical trial waiver for two cancer drugs, Aflibercept and Trastuzumab emtansine, on the plea that there is an unmet need for these drugs in the country. While Aflibercept is indicated for patients with metastatic colorectal cancer (MCRC), Trastuzumab emtansine is indicated for the treatment of patients with HER2-Positive.
- "In view of the fact there is no therapy available for this condition and in the interest of public, the committee recommended for the permission to import and market for the subject drug may be given subject to conduct of adequately powered phase IV clinical trial with a review of data in 2 years. The phase IV protocol should be duly approved by the CDSCO", the NDAC said in its report while recommending local clinical trial waiver for Trastuzumab emtansine.

3.3. Health ministry to approve clinical trial waiver to new drugs approved abroad for life threatening diseases

Sep 08, 2014

- In a significant decision aimed to avoid delay in the introduction of new drugs in the country indicated for serious / life threatening diseases like cancer, AIDS, etc and diseases of special relevance to Indian health scenario, the union health ministry has decided to approve waiver of local clinical trial to these new drugs which have already been approved in the well developed regulatory countries like USA, UK, Canada, Japan & Australia.
- The health ministry's decision in this regard came in response to a letter written by the CDSCO some time ago.

3.4. Health ministry makes inclusion of 3 parameters mandatory in clinical trial applications

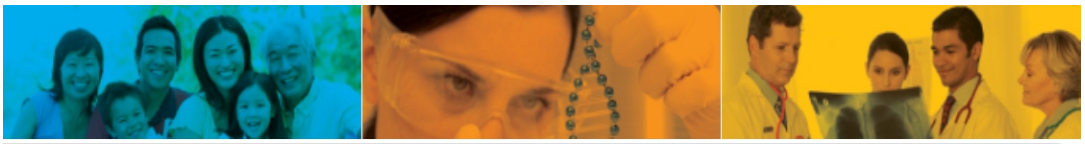
Sep 11, 2014

- The Union health ministry has made it mandatory for the clinical research organisations (CROs), clinical trial sponsors, medical institutions and other stakeholders involved in the conduct of clinical trials to provide information on assessment of risk versus benefit to the patients; innovation vis-à-vis existing therapeutic option; and unmet medical need in the country.
- The Supreme Court had passed an order dated 21/10/2013 saying all the Global Clinical Trials (GCTs)/New Clinical Trials (NCEs) should be evaluated having regard to three parameters, namely assessment of risk versus benefit to the patients; innovation vis-à-vis existing therapeutic option; and unmet medical need in the country.

3.5. Health ministry may relax rules on BA/BE studies in respect of drugs manufactured in India

Sep 22, 2014

- The Union health ministry is likely to relax rules on Bioavailability or Bioequivalence (BA/BE) studies in respect of drugs manufactured in the country.
- According to sources, the Drugs Consultative Committee (DCC) of the Union health ministry, which comprises all the state drug controllers besides senior health ministry officials including the DCGI, has recommended to the ministry that BA/BE studies in respect of drugs manufactured in the country should be insisted whenever there are issues relating to patient safety and variable bioavailability. After detailed deliberations, the DCC asked the DTAB to consider two issues.
- First, the requirement of BE study for subsequent approval of new drugs already approved in the country. Presently, BE study for oral dosage form of only new drugs is required till four years of approvals of these drugs. In order to make it mandatory for all drugs other than new drugs, it would require amendment in Rules. Such a provision will also have an impact on cost, time required for grant of license, infrastructure, etc.
- Second, continued permitting of (BA/BE) studies for export purpose. Presently, BA/BE studies of drugs of foreign manufacturer or by Indian manufacturer for generating data for submission to foreign Regulatory Authority for export purposes is being carried out at many centres in the country. The continuation of such studies for export purposes is required to be deliberated in the light of the recommendations of the Committee and its impact on the pharmaceutical industry.



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DRUG APPROVALS AND LAUNCHES

4.1. FDA approves Keryx chronic kidney disease drug — Sep 07, 2014

- Regulators in the USA have given the thumbs-up for Keryx Biopharmaceuticals chronic kidney disease drug ferric citrate but warned about the danger of iron load.
- The Food and Drug Administration has approved ferric citrate, formerly known as Zerenex, for the control of serum phosphorus levels in patients with chronic kidney disease (CKD) on dialysis. Keryx also noted that the treatment's pharmacodynamic properties resulted in increased ferritin and transferrin saturation, which remained relatively constant in patients treated with active control, i.e. with Sanofi's market-leading phosphate binder Renvela (sevelamer carbonate) and/or now-genericised PhosLo (calcium acetate).

4.2. Mylan launches ibandronate sodium injection in US market — Sept 08, 2014

- Mylan Inc., a global pharmaceutical company, has launched ibandronate sodium injection, 1 mg (base)/mL, packaged in 3 mg (base)/3 mL pre-filled glass syringes, which is the generic version of Hoffmann-La Roche's Boniva injection.
- Mylan received final approval from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for its Abbreviated New Drug Application (ANDA) for this product, which is indicated for the treatment of osteoporosis in postmenopausal women.

4.3. FDA Grants Approval for Pembrolizumab — Sep 09, 2014

- The US Food and Drug Administration has granted accelerated approval to Merck & Co's Keytruda for patients with advanced or unresectable melanoma who are no longer responding to other drugs.
- Keytruda (pembrolizumab) is the first FDA-approved drug that blocks the PD-1 (programmed death receptor-1) cellular pathway, which restricts the body's immune system from attacking melanoma cells. The checkpoint inhibitor is intended for use following treatment with Bristol-Myers Squibb's immunotherapy Yervoy (ipilimumab), while for melanoma patients whose tumours express the BRAF V600 gene mutation, Keytruda can be used after Yervoy and a BRAF inhibitor, like Roche's Zelboraf (vemurafenib) and GlaxoSmithKline's Tafinlar (dabrafenib).
- Other companies in the process of creating their own PD-1 treatments include Bristol-Myers Squibb (BMS) and AstraZeneca. Approval of the BMS's PD-1 is expected in the next few months.

4.4. First Biosimilar Insulin, Glargine, Approved in EU — Sep 10, 2014

- Lilly and Boehringer Ingelheim's biosimilar insulin glargine product has been approved in the European Union. The product is a basal insulin, an important mainstay of treatment for people with type 1 and type 2 diabetes.
- This is the first biosimilar insulin to receive regulatory approval in Europe, through the European Medicines Agency's (EMA's) biosimilar pathway, and is indicated to treat diabetes in adults, adolescents, and children aged 2 years and above. This follows a positive recommendation from the Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP) in June.

4.5. Lundbeck launches novel antidepressant drug, Brintellix in Denmark Sep 17, 2014

- H Lundbeck A/S (Lundbeck), a global pharmaceutical company specialized in brain diseases, has, has launched its novel antidepressant Brintellix (vortioxetine) in Denmark. This marks the first European launch and thereby the next step in the global introduction of Brintellix, which was commercially launched in the US in January 2014. Following the Danish launch, Brintellix, which is approved for treatment of major depressive episodes (MDE, hereafter referred to as "depression") in adults, will be introduced in several other European and International Markets during 2014 and 2015.

DRUGS IN DEVELOPMENT AND CLINICAL TRIALS

5.1. Synthetic Biologics to begin trials to prevent potentially deadly C. difficile infections

Sep 03, 2014

- Synthetic Biologics, Inc., a developer of novel anti-infective biologic and drug candidates targeting specific pathogens that cause serious infections and diseases, announced positive results from its final preclinical toxicology study of SYN-004. As per US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) guidance, this bridging study was required to move the Company's lead anti-infective, second-generation product candidate designed to prevent the devastating effects of Clostridium difficile (C. Difficile), toward the clinic.
- The company is in the final stages of preparing its SYN-004 IND application for submission to the FDA, with the expectation of initiating phase Ia and Ib clinical trials in the fourth quarter of 2014, and a phase II efficacy study in the first half of 2015.

5.2. Roche commences phase III clinical trials for lampalizumab Sep 17, 2014

- Switzerland-based Roche has commenced phase III clinical trials for lampalizumab, an investigational drug for the treatment of geographic atrophy (GA). GA is an advanced form of age-related macular degeneration (AMD), a progressive condition that may induce blindness.
- The phase III trials, known as Chroma (GX29176) and Spectri (GX29185), are double-masked, randomized studies that will compare 10mg dose of lampalizumab administered every four or six weeks by intravitreal injection to sham injections.

5.3. Bayer and Orion Initiate Phase III Trial of Novel Prostate Cancer Agent ODM-201 Sep 16, 2014

- Bayer HealthCare and Orion Corporation, a pharmaceutical company based in Espoo, Finland, have begun to enroll patients in a Phase III trial with ODM-201, an investigational novel oral androgen receptor (AR) inhibitor in clinical development for the treatment of patients with prostate cancer.
- The study, called ARAMIS, evaluates ODM-201 in men with castration-resistant prostate cancer (CRPC) who have rising Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) levels and no detectable metastases. The trial is designed to determine the effects of the treatment on metastasis-free survival (MFS).

MERGER, ACQUISITIONS AND COLLABORATIONS

6.1. AstraZeneca signs oncology pact with Redx Pharma Sep 03, 2014

- AstraZeneca has entered into a cancer collaboration with Redx Pharma, which operates from the Anglo-Swedish drugmaker's former R&D headquarters at Alderley Park. The partners will discover and develop new molecules targeting a genetic driver of tumour growth and survival and the collaboration will involve Redx scientists working with AstraZeneca's oncology innovative medicines group (IMED).
- Cashwise, Redx will receive an upfront payment and is eligible for "significant development and commercial milestones, as well as tiered royalties".

6.2. Google unit links up with AbbVie for $1.5 billion aging project Sep 03, 2014

- AbbVie and Google's new life sciences unit Calico are putting in at least $250 million each to collaborate on drugs for age-related diseases, helping the later "establish a world-class R&D facility" in San Francisco.
- Each partner may contribute an additional $500 million to the collaboration which will look at areas such as neurodegeneration and cancer. Calico will be responsible for research and early development during the first five years and advance projects through Phase IIa for a ten-year period, with the support of AbbVie.
- Following completion of Phase IIa studies, AbbVie will have the option to manage late-stage development and commercial activities. Both parties will share costs and profits equally.

6.3. Sun Pharma and Merck sign exclusive worldwide licensing agreement for Tildrakizumab

Sep 18, 2014

- Merck and Sun Pharmaceutical Industries have entered into an exclusive worldwide licensing agreement for the former's investigational therapeutic antibody candidate, tildrakizumab (MK-3222).
- Tildrakizumab is a humanized, anti-IL-23p19 monoclonal antibody that binds specifically to IL-23p19 and is designed to selectively block the cytokine IL-23. It is currently being evaluated in Phase 3 registration trials for the treatment of chronic plaque psoriasis, a skin ailment.

6.4. Lupin and Merck Serono enter into strategic alliance Sep 17, 2014

- Lupin and Merck Serono have entered into a strategic partnership to support the later to broaden its general medicines portfolio in emerging markets. As part of this partnership, around 20 more new products will be added to the current portfolio, with first launches likely to happen in 2016.
- Lupin will also take initiatives in areas such as the production, supply of product dossiers and finished product to Merck Serono, while the later will be the marketing authorization holder for the products.

TECHNOLOGY NEWS

7.1. DICOM Grid introduces interactive guide to display image-enabling electronic medical record

Sep 01, 2014

- DICOM Grid, a healthcare IT company that makes digital medical imaging accessible to medical facilities and physicians, has introduced an interactive guide which demonstrates how to bridge the gap between the electronic medical record (EMR) and image management systems. Through contextually embedded links, readers can experience, first-hand, how seamless integration makes diagnostic studies accessible within the patient record.
- The guide, “How to Image-Enable the EMR”, gives healthcare providers and EMR vendors the ability to test-drive DICOM Grid's browser-based image viewer. It also offers key insights into how imaging can be made available within the patient jacket.
- Specific topics include: The functionality users should expect from image-enablement; The types of security, controls, and privileges that protect imaging data; Satisfying the Meaningful Use Stage 2 menu requirement involving image accessibility; Tips for ensuring the deployment process runs smoothly.