Melbourne Melanoma Project

Scientific Exchange Meeting

21ˢᵗ June 2018

Program

6:00pm	Prof. Grant Mc Arthur Peter Mac/University of Melbourne	**Welcome, MMP/MRV Update**
6:20pm	Mr Grant Davidson Davidson Branding	**The Story Behind the New Melanoma Research Victoria Brand Identity**
6:30pm	Dr Andrew Haydon Alfred Hospital	**Adjuvant treatment for Stage 3 Melanoma: Worth the wait**
7:00pm	<u>Research Vignettes</u>	
	Mrs Alison Button-Sloan MMP-CRG	**MRV Consumer Reference Group**
	Ms Daniela Tantalo Peter Mac	**Determining the Immune Cell Identities and Roles in Human Melanoma**
	Dr Jessica Duarte ONJCRI	**Predicting toxicities in melanoma patients treated with immunotherapy**
	Dr Claire Martin Peter Mac	**Combination targeted therapies for melanoma**
	Mr Tom Witkowski ONJCRI	**Tracking anti-tumour cells in melanoma**
	Dr Matthew Howard Alfred Hospital	**Analysis of survival of patients with cutaneous melanoma by anatomical location including investigation of desmoplastic and nodular melanoma subtypes**
7:30pm	Dr Anousha Yazdabadi Northern Hospital	**Skin thinking, artificial intelligence in Dermatology**
8:00pm	**Celebratory Refreshments**	

Although traffic and the cool temperature were a challenge, almost one hundred people filled the level 5 meeting room of the Olivia Newton-John Cancer Research Institute to witness the formal morphing of MMP into Melanoma Research Victoria (MRV) and to hear about the latest in melanoma research. Professor Grant McArthur opened the meeting, acknowledging the traditional owners and the exceptional hospitality of Professor Jonathan Cebon and his team. He then went on to elaborate about many of the metrics reported in the MMP Newsletter #9, highlighting the importance of this collaboration for research. The discussion regarding the number of postcodes and then the percentages of rural (33%) vs metropolitan participants (67%) further clarified the reasoning to change the project name from 'Melbourne' centric to the inclusive 'Victoria'.

Figure 1 conveys some of the thought behind the brand itself.

Mr Grant Davidson, from Davidson Branding, then spoke about the consultative journey the project took to ultimately come up with our new brand (Figure 1). The reflective detail was a reminder of how we have grown as a project and how we have come to value collaboration, which in turn has improved our productivity.

Dr Anousha Yazdabadi then captured our imagination with the idea of computers photographing, mapping and diagnosing melanoma lesions. She cited a few examples of new Artificial Intelligence (AI) work underway but then very clearly outlined the huge problems with respect to algorithms and replication across institutes. Work is definitely still in the development phase and our dermatologists cannot retire just yet. The issues are not insurmountable and technology is advancing so fast that Anousha predicted that she would be co-diagnosing melanomas with a computer within in her career timeline.

As always the research vignettes were very well received. The speakers adhered to the strict 4 minutes and provided us with a punchy snapshot of melanoma activity in Victoria. Alison Button-Sloan highlighted the past, present and future work of the MRV Consumer Representative Group. Daniela Tantalo very succinctly described how tumour tissue can be made into single cells and sorted into cell types to analyse immune cell roles in melanomas, possibly even predicting patient responses to immunotherapies. Dr Jessica Duarte wowed us with the idea that the detection of autoantibodies in the blood could inform doctors which patients would be likely to have immunotherapy toxicities, so they could be monitored more closely or swapped to alternate treatments. Dr Claire Martin described the positive effects seen in mouse melanoma studies when a BRAF inhibitor (Vemurafenib) and a CDK4 inhibitor (Palbociclib) were used together - far more impressive than BRAF on its own or a BRAF/MEK (Cobimetinib) combination. The only down side observed was that tumours previously exposed to BRAF were unable to respond as well as a naïve tumours to the BRAF/CDK4 combination. Would this be the case in humans? Tom Witkowski enthusiastically informed us about the military role of the immune T-cells in our body and how they have specialised external cell machinery (receptors) to detect outside proteins on melanoma cancer cells (ligands). Each receptor has a unique genetic sequence which Tom can use to detect and measure the type and number of tumour cells in a patient's blood. Interestingly this changes significantly over the course of time. Dr Matthew Howard is currently reviewing the data from the Victorian Melanoma Service in conjunction with the

Victorian Cancer Registry data to determine if the site of a primary melanoma on the body can predict survival. He also continued the Artificial Intelligence theme, describing an additional proposed project utilising whole body imaging in collaboration with MoleMap and IBM.

The presentations rounded up with Dr Andrew Haydon giving us a comprehensive look at the international clinical trial results, which noticeably supported the use of immunotherapies in the adjuvant setting. Many trial patients offered treatments after their surgery have had considerably longer disease free periods, which was attributed to the elimination of any possible micro melanoma disease. The trial participants will be followed for an additional number of years but the results to date are very encouraging.

During the meeting we also thanked Professor Ian Davis and Professor John Kelly for their long term work as MRV Governance Committee members. They were presented with inaugural MRV Excellence Awards. The meeting concluded with a celebratory supper and ongoing melanoma conversations. Many positive comments were heard and many have subsequently been received via email. Thank you.
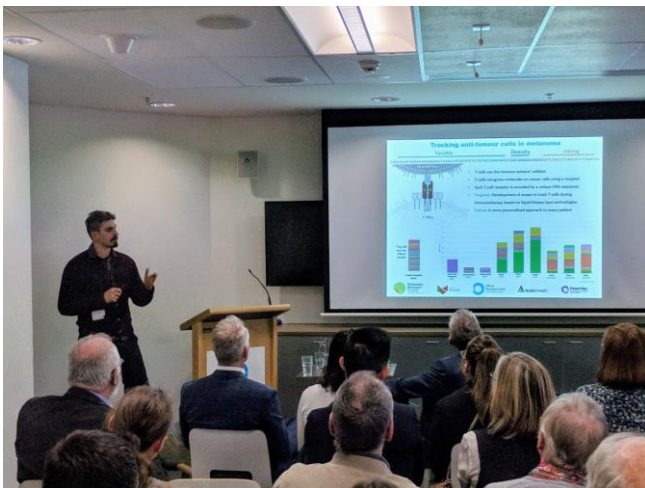

Photo: Boris Wong   **Photos: MRV**