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Sirtex Medical Ltd (ASX:SRX) – Clinical Trial Results

Sirtex is pleased to announce the results of its latest randomised clinical trial are to be published in the Journal of Surgical Oncology (JSO) in the near future. JSO is a premier peer-reviewed international oncology journal.

This clinical trial was a small study of 21 patients, was conducted in Australia and started in 1999. It was designed to evaluate the benefit of adding a single treatment with SIR-Spheres[®] to a standard regimen of chemotherapy in patients with advanced bowel cancer that had spread to the liver. The trial compared the use of a regimen of systemic chemotherapy using 5-Fluorouracil and Leucovorin (FU/LV) with the same chemotherapy regimen plus one treatment with SIR-Spheres[®].

The trial demonstrated that treatment with SIR-Spheres[®] greatly improved the outcome for patients. The results showed that the number of patients who developed a response to treatment (i.e. tumors significantly decreased in size after treatment) increased from 0% to 73% ($p < 0.001$), that the time tumours were held in remission increased from 3.4 months to 15.6 months ($p < 0.0005$) and that median survival of patients increased from 12.8 months to 29.4 months ($p = 0.02$).

Bruce Gray, CEO of Sirtex and a Principal Investigator on this study stated that, when compared to other similar clinical trials in patients with bowel cancer, these results were truly outstanding. By way of comparison, earlier this year Genentech released the results of its randomised trial that showed repeated treatments with Avastin held bowel cancer in remission for 4.2 months and increased median survival of patients by 4.7 months. Avastin has been universally recognised as a major advance in the treatment of bowel cancer.

The results of this trial add to the mounting evidence that SIR-Spheres[®] are an effective treatment for a wide range of cancers that either start in the liver, or spread to the liver from other organs such as the bowel. As stated in the Sirtex ASX announcement of 11th May 2004, ongoing clinical trials are an integral part of all pharmaceutical and medical device companies' activities. These trials serve many functions and are designed to increase market awareness of the product, engender support from key opinion leaders, produce scientific results for publication, provide expanded up-to-date marketing material and extend the indications for use of products. Sirtex Medical Limited will continue to support an increasing range of clinical trials to obtain these objectives.

About Bowel Cancer: Bowel cancer is amongst the commonest of all cancers and will affect approximately 3% of the population of many western societies such as Australia, USA and Europe. Despite advances in treatment, bowel cancer remains one of the leading causes of cancer death due largely to the fact that it frequently spreads to the liver.

About SIR-Spheres®: SIR-Spheres® were designed to target tumours within the liver with high doses of radiation and have been shown to be effective in treating a wide range of cancers that spread to the liver. SIR-Spheres® were approved by the FDA in 2002 and are being used in an increasing number of hospitals in USA and Europe to treat a variety of liver cancers. It is important that Sirtex generate further clinical trial data that will demonstrate the effectiveness of the product.

Further Information: Further information about the results of this and other clinical trials can be obtained from Peter Manley, Company Secretary or Bruce Gray, CEO, on +61(2) 9856 0400. Alternatively, detailed information on SIR-Spheres® and other company products and activities can be obtained from the company's web site at www.sirtex.com