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VTE in advanced disease

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The association between cancer and venous thromboembolism (VTE) has been recognised for over 140 years and its management of in the advanced cancer population pose several unique challenges to palliative care teams. Anticoagulation with conventional oral agents is associated with increased bleeding rates and recurrent thromboses. Newer agents such as low molecular weight heparins offer improved efficacy and safety but require a daily injection.

Whilst VTE is common in cancer, its true impact in the palliative care population is still unclear. In a specialty devoted to patient centred care, it is important at all times to use informed patient choice to guide treatment options in the palliative care setting. The role of thromboprophylaxis in a heterogeneous palliative care population is still unclear and the use of prophylaxis in the hospice setting remains controversial.

This session will aim to review the evidence for the treatment and prevention of VTE in palliative care as well as identify areas of uncertainty that require further investigation.

Dr Simon Noble is a Clinical Senior Lecturer in Palliative Medicine at Cardiff University and Honorary Consultant at the Royal Gwent Hospital in Newport. His research interests include the management of venous thromboembolism (VTE) in cancer, quality of life effects of VTE and their therapies, clinical decision making in VTE management and the patient journey. He is co investigator on the FRAGMATIC study which is an RCT of 2200 lung cancer patients investigating the impact of dalteparin on survival in lung cancer patients and is co director of the Thrombosis Research in Advanced Disease Alliance.

He is on the faculty for the 1000 Lives Campaign in Wales acting as medical director for the thromboprophylaxis intervention. He also chairs the All Wales Thromboprophylaxis Group and the All Wales Thrombosis Campaign for Lifeblood, in his capacity as Lifeblood Medical Director for Wales. He is treasurer of the UK Thromboprophylaxis Forum and is on the NICE guideline development group for thromboprophylaxis in hospitalised patients.

He has published 5 books, 20 chapters and over 50 original papers and abstracts. His most recent book "Venous thromboembolism in Advanced Disease" edited with Miriam Johnson and Agnes Lee is ranked 966,603 in the Amazon best seller list

Dr Miriam Johnson is a Senior Lecturer in Palliative Medicine at Hull-York Medical School. Her research interests include symptom management in advanced heart failure and venous thromboembolism (VTE) in advanced cancer patients (MD thesis 1999). She is Honorary Consultant to St. Catherine's Hospice and the Acute NHS Trust hospital, Scarborough, and has developed one of the first UK joint cardiology-palliative care services. She is a member of the Science Committee of the UK Association of Palliative Medicine, the National Council for Palliative Care Heart Failure Policy Group, the National Cancer Research Institute Clinical Studies Group in Palliative Care and is co-director of the Thrombosis Research in Advanced Disease Alliance.

She is a grant holder of 3 NIHR grants one of which is a study of clinical decision making regarding VTE in advanced cancer. She is a reviewer for NIHR grant applications and a manuscript reviewer for a number of major journals. Recent VTE publications (co-author; Simon Noble) include a systematic review and meta-analysis of management of VTE in patients with advanced cancer (Lancet Oncology 2008) and "Venous thromboembolism in Advanced Disease; a Clinical Guide" (co-editors: Simon Noble and Agnes Lee) is the first book to address this difficult management issue.