

First oral treatment for highly active relapsing remitting MS for UK patients

The first oral treatment for multiple sclerosis (MS) is now available in the UK. Fingolimod 0.5mg (Gilenya™) has been authorised for people with highly active relapsing remitting multiple sclerosis (RRMS) who have failed to respond to an interferon (injection), or for those with rapidly evolving severe disease.

Fingolimod provides a treatment option for patients failing on injections but whose disease is not severe enough for infusion therapy. Patients on an interferon need to have had one or more relapses within the last year to be eligible for treatment with fingolimod.

Fingolimod is a new class of drug called a sphingosine 1-phosphate (S1P) receptor modulator

that works in a completely different way to any other MS treatment. As fingolimod is an immunomodulator, it does not kill lymphocytes but retains them in the lymph nodes thereby preserving key immune functions.

Fingolimod is available to appropriate patients in the UK and neurologists can apply for treatment reimbursement via individual funding requests. NICE is currently reviewing fingolimod and will issue draft guidance in July 2011.

For more information contact Novartis on Tel. +44 (0)1276 698 691.

Innovations for imaging and diagnostics

Siemens Healthcare presented innovations for imaging and diagnostics at the European Congress of Radiology 2011. Highlights included the Biograph™ mMR, the world's first integrated whole-body molecular MR with simultaneous data acquisition technology, and two new radiography systems: the MULTIX Select DR and the Mobilett Mira. Siemens also showcased its image management and diagnostic software syngo[®]via.

The Biograph mMR has the potential to provide new diagnostic opportunities in neurology, as well as opening up new opportunities for research. It comprises a 3-Tesla magnetic resonance (MR) scanner and an integrated positron emission tomography (PET) detection system, making it possible to simultaneously capture MR and PET data with a whole-body system for the first time. While MR provides intricate morphological and functional details in human tissue, PET goes further to investigate the human body at the level of cellular activity and metabolism.



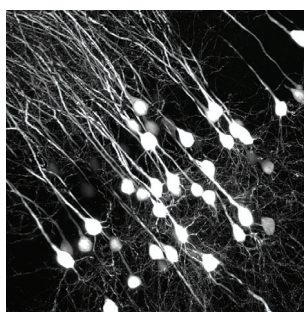
The MULTIX Select DR is an entry-level X-ray system that facilitates cost-effective access to Digital Radiography. The Mobilett Mira is Siemens' first mobile digital X-ray system with a wireless detector. syngo.via, Siemens' imaging software for multimodality reading of clinical cases, has advanced visualisation tools and automated processes helps increase reading efficiency across multiple specialities.

For more information contact Siemens Healthcare on Tel. +44 (0)1276 696374

Nikon introduces streamlined A1 MP imaging system

Nikon has developed a streamlined version of its A1R MP multiphoton confocal imaging system. The new A1 MP scanner has been developed for simplified, cost-effective multiphoton imaging, whilst maintaining the sensitivity and quality of the highly respected A1R MP system. Multiphoton imaging is becoming increasingly popular for cell-friendly, dynamic live cell and deep tissue imaging but budgetary constraints have, historically, prevented some laboratories from realising the full potential of this technique.

Fluorescence detection is undertaken by Nikon's highly sensitive NDD detectors (Non Descan Detectors). The scanner is capable of



frame rates up to 10 fps, depending on image size and can easily be upgraded to true spectral imaging using Nikon's spectral detector.

The A1 MP imaging system can be used in conjunction with Nikon's upright FN1 microscope and inverted Nikon Ti-E microscope, where it can also be combined with a TIRF system and

incorporated with the Perfect Focus System for long term, deep tissue imaging.

For more marketing information on Nikon microscopes please contact Nikon Instruments Europe: Tel. +44 (0)208 2471718 E. info@nikoninstruments.eu, www.nikoninstruments.eu/

Alzheimer's drugs to be made available to all

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) recently released its final guidance on four Alzheimer's drugs. The guidance means the drugs Aricept, Exelon and Reminyl will be available on prescription to people in the early and moderate stages of Alzheimer's and Ebixa will be available to people in the late stages. PCTs must now ensure they are providing funding for the drugs by June 2011. This final decision represents a reversal of the position which was in place since 2007 which limited access to drugs to only people in moderate stages.

Sativex[®] improves symptoms of spasticity due to MS



Results from a phase III clinical study published online in the European Journal of Neurology Early View showed that about half of all people with moderate to severe spasticity due to multiple sclerosis (MS) who have not responded adequately to standard anti-spasticity therapy, find that adding Sativex[®] Oromucosal Spray (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and cannabidiol (CBD)), to their existing medication can improve the debilitating symptoms of spasticity associated with MS.

The primary efficacy endpoint was the change in a validated, 10 point (0-10) self-reported spasticity numerical rating scale (NRS) from the point of randomisation to the end of the treatment. Sativex[®] was shown to provide significant improvement, compared to placebo, in the NRS spasticity score, spasm frequency and sleep disturbance related to spasticity.

See <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1468-1331.2010.03328.x/abstract> or www.sativex.co.uk

Epilepsy Society goes purple

Epilepsy Society, formerly the National Society for Epilepsy (NSE), has rebranded and gone purple – the internationally recognised colour for epilepsy. As well as changing its name and colour to purple the charity has also redesigned and updated its website. Bridget Gardiner, Epilepsy Society's Director of Fundraising and Marketing, said, "By simplifying our name and updating our look, we hope to reach out to more people. Our vision is for a full life for everyone affected by epilepsy. In addition, we'll be focusing on some new areas identified during the review of the charity's brand and strategic direction – campaigning in particular. We want to work more closely with people affected by epilepsy to make a real difference."

For more information see www.epilepsysociety.org.uk