

ADVANCING SALIVARY GLAND CANCER RESEARCH:
A MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO ADDRESSING
THE UNMET CLINICAL NEED

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On behalf of SGC UK RWG Members: I Boon, L Bingle, S Dobbs, S Garikpati, M Ho, W Ince, P Jimenez, A Khurram, E Kinloch, N Mani, J McCaul, A Nelson, C Schilling, R Newlands, S Rack, R Rieu, N Spardy Burr, N Stobbs, and S Winter



DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Robert Metcalf

Speaker, consultancy or advisory roles: Avacta Life Sciences, Rgenta, Regeneron, Sanofi

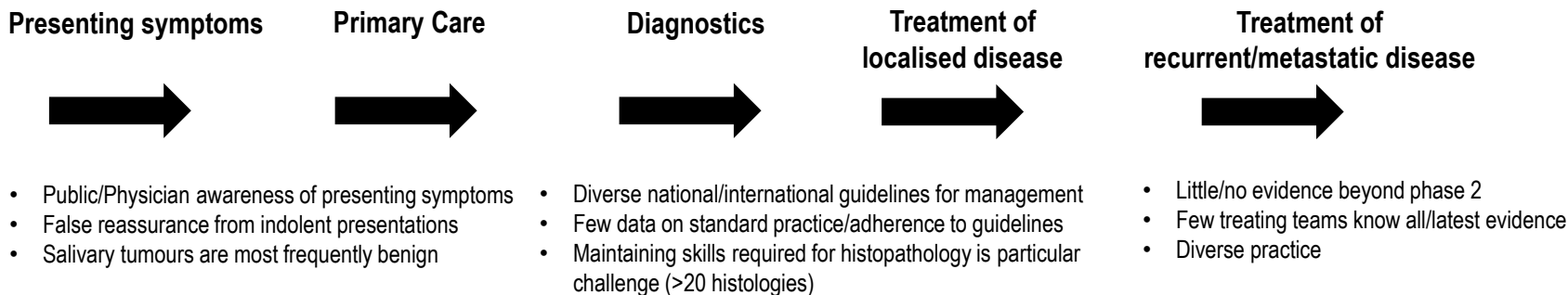
Non-financial role as co-founder of Salivary Gland Cancer UK (Registered Charity)

BACKGROUND

Unmet need

Salivary Gland Cancer (SGC) represents a significant area of unmet clinical need, with challenges throughout diagnosis, treatment and long-term survival.

Many of these are shared across most rare cancers.



BACKGROUND

Unmet need

As a rare and diverse set of cancers, SGC necessitates a multi-institutional, multidisciplinary approach to effectively address the gaps in research and clinical care.



SALIVARY GLAND CANCER UK RESEARCH WORKING GROUP

Origin following closure of NCRI (UK National Cancer Research Institute)

The NCRI was established in 2001 and closed in 2023

NCRI **purpose** was to drive **collaboration** between organisations that fund cancer research.

- Collaborating with public funders, charities and industry to shape a cohesive research system
- Sharing information and insight to build best practice and accelerate action
- Convening the best brains in the UK to collaborate on cross-cutting and cutting-edge clinical trials
- Developing world-leading expertise in patient advocate involvement
- Growing a research-ready cancer workforce of the future at scale and speed.



Partners in cancer research

CLOSED 2023

BACKGROUND

Unmet need

The SGC UK Research Working Group (RWG) was formed in 2024

- Transferred in the leadership of the NCRI Salivary Cancer Research Working Group
- Consumer co-produced
- Co-chaired by two salivary clinicians and a patient advocate
- Actively sought out and brought together leaders within the field
- >30 active contributors
 - Relevant clinical specialties (from pathology through to late effects)
 - Patient advocates
 - Industry
 - Charity
 - International
- Overcoming inter-disciplinary, inter-institutional and international barriers
- Driving collaboration and progress in rare cancers



SALIVARY GLAND CANCER UK RESEARCH WORKING GROUP

Prioritising Research Workstreams

Bringing together experts from all relevant specialties to collaborate and set research objectives aimed at improving patient outcomes.



2024



March 2024

In-person meeting to discuss research activities

May 2024

Online voting process to rank research priorities

July 2024

Established 4 workstreams from top four priorities

October 2024

In person meeting to discuss and refine 4 workstreams

2025



Q1 2025

Online meeting to agree workstream deliverables

Q2 2025

In-person meeting to update group

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Prioritising Research Workstreams

1: Collating and reviewing existing national/international SGC guidelines to identify areas of consensus and gaps.

Context/Challenges:

- Current guidelines
 - Royal College of Pathologists (2024)
 - HN Cancer UK Guidelines
 - ESMO 2022
 - ASCO 2022
 - NCCN 2024
 - German Guidelines AWMF-S3

Year 1 deliverables under consideration:

- Perform and publish systematic review of existing guidelines
- Identify and publish consensus on areas of agreement
- Use areas of agreement to benchmark for audit
- Use areas of divergence to support study development

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Prioritising Research Workstreams

2: Investigating the variation in histopathology reporting across UK centres, with a view to collecting data to inform development of larger studies.

Context/Challenges:

- Variable histopathology reporting between centres
- Unclear of optimum number of cases per year to maintain skills
- Informal support/second opinion networks

Year 1 deliverables under consideration:

- Review and publish existing UK pathology databases for change in/accuracy of diagnosis following review
- Describe clinical consequences of any change in diagnosis identified
- Evaluate utility of AI and greater centralisation pathology reporting

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Prioritising Research Workstreams

3: Exploring patient experiences and developing a core outcome set for decision-making in high-morbidity surgeries.

Context/Challenges:

- Variable clinical decision making for high morbidity/borderline operable cases
- Patient voice is needed
- Need for improved clinical or translational predictors of outcomes

Year 1 deliverables under consideration:

- Qualitative interviews or patient experiences
- Develop core outcome set for studies
- Retrospective analysis of surgical/margin status and outcomes
- Pilot translational studies to develop predictors of outcome

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Prioritising Research Workstreams

4: Analysing diagnostic pathways through a patient survey to identify challenges in primary care and referral practices.

Context/Challenges:

- Most major SGC not referred through gold standard suspected cancer referral pathways
- Current guidance misses important presenting symptoms eg facial palsy
- SGC less likely to be diagnosed at curable stage than other head/neck cancers

Year 1 deliverables under consideration:

- Patient/carer survey of experience of diagnostic pathways
- Focus on salivary type cancers of diverse primary sites
- Stakeholder engagement to review/update/develop guidance documents for submission to NICE

TAKE HOME MESSAGES

The SGC UK RWG is continuing in place of the NCRI to address critical research needs in SGC

Through a series of meetings and online discussions, we identified key areas requiring urgent attention

Initially with a focus on existing guidelines, histopathology accuracy, decision-making processes, and diagnostic pathways, the group aims to improve clinical outcomes for SGC patients

Ongoing collaboration and the development of evidence-based recommendations will guide future research, with a goal to influence clinical practice and policy

TAKE HOME MESSAGES

The top four research questions/workstreams are on a 'rolling' basis with a longer list of 13 RQ's identified for us to address.

International collaboration and inputs are welcomed

You can find more information on our website here:

<https://www.salivaryglandcancer.uk/uk-salivary-gland-cancer-research-working-group-uksgcrwg/>

2025 ESMO SARCOMA AND RARE CANCERS

Annual Congress

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