

Multinational pharmaceutical company opens SSC in Malaysia

DR. JOSLYN NGU

A finance, procurement and information technology (IT) shared service centre (SSC) for Roche's offices in the Asia Pacific region begins operations in Malaysia.

"We are pleased to welcome the opening of Roche's global SSC for the Asia Pacific region, an expansion of its current business portfolio in sales and distribution of pharmaceutical and diagnostic products and services in the country," said Dato' Seri Ong Ka Chuan, Malaysia's Second Minister of International Trade and Industry. "This investment made by Roche reflects the company's continued confidence in Malaysia and is another proof of the country's continued allure as a



Dato' Seri Ong Ka Chuan, Second Minister of International Trade and Industry of Malaysia, and Dr. Alan Hippé, Chief Financial and Information Officer of Roche Group, standing together at the opening of the Roche Shared Service Centre (SSC) in Malaysia.

favoured investment destination."

"Roche now joins more than 350 foreign and multinational companies who have set up re-

gional and global shared services and outsourcing centres in Malaysia. This investment will also improve the growth of our services

workforce. This will allow the company to reach economies of scale by centralising some services in a single location. With this, the Asia Pacific region affiliates can focus on the core business of bringing medicines and diagnostic tests to patients who need them.

Malaysia was chosen as the centre to create a global SSC for the Asia Pacific region as it is strategically located in the heart of Southeast Asia. Furthermore, it has strong foreign direct investment policies, a dynamic business environment and a friendly competitive market, said Martin Kalkstein, General Manager of Roche Services (ASIA PACIFIC) Sdn Bhd.

As an affiliate of the Roche Group, Roche Services (ASIA PACIFIC) Sdn Bhd will contribute to best practice for compliance across Roche and improve process transparency plus alignment across geographies.

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HER2 blocker now available in alternative formulation

A recently developed human epidermal growth factor receptor (HER) 2 inhibitor which can be delivered subcutaneously is now registered and available locally as adjuvant treatment for HER2 positive breast cancer.

Breast cancer treatment plans are formed based on the cancer stage and molecular profile. Generally, HER2 positive breast cancer is more aggressive and requires additional therapy with a HER2 inhibitor to improve outcome and prevent relapse, said consultant clinical oncologist Dato' Dr. Mohamed Ibrahim Abdul Wahid.

According to the 2007 national cancer registry, breast cancer is the most common cancer among Malaysians. [Ministry of Health. Available at http://www.care.upm.edu.my/dokumen/13603_NCR2007.pdf. Accessed on 10



From left Dr. Shazril Imran Shaukat, Vinod Narayanan and Dato' Dr. Mohamed Ibrahim Wahid.

Nov] Unfortunately, around one-in-five women with breast cancer is HER2 positive, said Mohamed Ibrahim.

Cancer cells with HER2 over-expression are usually more aggressive because the receptor

increases cancer cell proliferation and blocks apoptosis, he explained. Patients with HER2 positive breast cancer must be treated with the addition of a HER2 blocker because the risk of relapse is very high.

Those with HER2 positive early breast cancer are usually given HER2 blockers for up to a year, and longer for those who are diagnosed at later stages, said Mohamed Ibrahim. The total number of doses required in a year is 18, including the first dose that is usually given together with chemotherapy.

With the launch of the latest formulation, patients now have a more convenient treatment alternative to the antecedent intravenous (IV) formulation, said consultant clinical oncologist Dr. Shazril Imran Shaukat. The latter still has a place in HER2 positive breast cancer treatment as it is convenient to administer the first

dose using the IV route in patients who are undergoing their first round of chemotherapy.

The subcutaneous (SC) formulation will be convenient for the following 17 doses as the SC method requires less time to administer and is less invasive. It can be easily injected in the thighs or abdomen, both of which are the preferred injection sites, said Shazril.

The SC formulation has been shown to be as effective and safe as the IV formulation for HER2 positive early breast cancer. [Eur J Cancer 2016;62:62-75, Lancet Oncol 2012;13(9):869-878] It is now available in both MOH and private hospitals.

Both Mohamed Ibrahim and Shazril were speaking at the launch of the SC formulation of Herceptin, held in Kuala Lumpur recently.

New oral supplement for better joint lubrication

SARAS RAMIYA

A new oral supplement is useful in improving joint lubrication and delaying the progression of osteoarthritis, says an expert.

The novel supplement is a combination of hyaluronic acid (HA) (Mobilee®) and type II collagen (B2cool®), both of which are extracted from rooster combs

and chicken sternum cartilage, respectively, said Marta Masides Olagorta, international scientific manager of Bioiberica, Barcelona, Spain.

"This is a new and good solution because you only take one capsule a day for 2 months. It's able to provide HA to lubricate joints and it's able to restore and repair the damage to the cartilage

that happens during the osteoarthritis process," she said.

HA is the main component of the fluid in our joints that helps to lubricate joints and facilitate movement. In osteoarthritis, we lose the quantity and quality of HA in joints due to degradation. The other important molecule is type



Marta Masides Olagorta

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