Management of Haematological Malignancies: from bedside to laboratory and back again
(SP2 module– 12 students)

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Project SP2 module 12 students

Introduction

The management of Haematological malignancies has changed greatly over the last few decades leading to improved survival for most but not all patients with these blood cancers.

This special study module offers an opportunity to choose a topic related to haematological malignancies and to critically evaluate this topic in detail.

Haematologists are in a unique position in medicine. Not only do they clinically assess the patient at the bedside, but then make the pathological diagnosis in the laboratory, before returning to the patient and treating them.

This is one of the reasons why many novel therapies and investigations find themselves used in the management of haematological malignancies before being used in other branches of medicine. This module offers an opportunity to study a particular disease (leukaemia, lymphoma, myeloma or other myeloid or lymphoid disease). The disease will be studied from the clinical presentation, through to the various laboratory investigations (including cytology, histology, immunology and genetics), and finally the treatment. The module will include how the biology of the disease affects current and novel treatments.

Aims

We expect students to:

1. Have a grasp of the importance of the various laboratory investigations in the diagnosis and treatment of haematological malignancy
2. Understand how the biology of the disease and the biology of the patient affects treatment decisions
3. Understand the common treatments and their side effects for patients with a Haematological cancer

Delivery

1. There will be initial tutorials/seminars with leading clinicians in their field to give an understanding of the types of haematological malignancies
2. Students will decide on a disease aspect that they are interested in, and present a short 1-2 slide summary. They will then attend specialist out-patient clinics, and/or attend in-patient wards (dependent on the type) of disease, whilst
3. There will also be a programme of laboratory visits (haematology, immunology and genetics) relating what the students see clinically to the lab investigations.

Assessment
Will be based on
1. Performance in group discussions
2. Presentation skills at their interactive presentation
3. Written dissertation

Examples of the types of topic that may be studied include:
- The influence of cytogenetic analysis in the treatment of acute myeloid leukaemia
- How has serum free light chain assessment altered the management of myeloma?
- A novel therapy and how it has altered management of a Haematological cancer
- How to balance toxicity against improving responses for older patients with a particular Haematological cancer