Title: Personalized Medicine in Oncology

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Personalized Medicine in Oncology is a yearly meeting supported by the European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO) and the Faculty of Medicine, Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai, Thailand. The meeting was intended to be a platform for education to Medical Oncologist in Thailand and South-East Asia. This year the meeting was attended by 120 oncologists; ten percent of the attendant are ESMO members. The meeting providing the latest information on personalized treatment of cancer with focus on renal cancer, lung cancer and supportive care.

In her opening address, Dr. Sumitra Thongprasert as Conference Chair and the ESMO Regional Representative referred to the increasing importance of Medical Oncology in Thailand and the importance of international co-operation in the field of cancer. In this context, she thanked ESMO and Faculty of Medicine for supporting the Conference. As a member of the ESMO Faculty on Chest Tumors, Dr. Robert Pirker from Austria stressed the global role of ESMO in providing good science and clinical practice. He also invited participants to join ESMO and attend the upcoming ESMO Congress 2012 in Vienna, Austria.

Most talks were devoted to emerging targeted therapies in patients with cancers. The first-half day (December 11, 2011) focussed on renal cancer. Dr. Thongprasert summarized the current treatment options and Dr. Se-Hoon Lee from Korea presented recent therapeutic advances for patients with renal cancer.

The second half-day (December 11, 2011) and the last day, December 12, 2011 focussed on lung cancer and supportive care. Dr. Chih-Hsin Yang from Taiwan presented the recent advances in the treatment with EGFR-directed tyrosine kinase inhibitors. He stressed the importance of mutation analysis for the selection of patients. Molecular advances in lung cancer pathology were reviewed by Dr. Fred Hirsch from the USA. He extensively discussed the pros and cons of the various laboratory techniques currently used for biomarker analysis. Dr. Robert Pirker reviewed the importance of histology and the recently described EGFR immunohistochemistry score as predictive biomarkers for treatment selection in patients with advanced non-small cell lung cancer. The advances but also challenges of angiogenesis inhibition were discussed by Dr. Narin Voravud from Thailand. Dr. Busayamas Chewaskulyong from Thailand summarized the current treatment standard in small cell lung cancer.
The importance of quality of life and strategies for its assessment in daily practice were outlined by Dr. Thongprasert. Nutritional management of patients with cancer was discussed by Dr. Jonathan Asprer from the Philippines.

Overall the conference provided the audience with the latest advances but also challenges with regard to personalized medicine in patients with cancer. The Conference schedule allowed for sufficient time for discussions. The interaction between the participants was further stimulated by case presentations and the availability of a voting system.

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