Evidence-based management of adult patients with diffuse glioma

Authors’ reply
We appreciate the interest of our colleagues representing the European Low-Grade Glioma Network in the updated European Association for Neuro-Oncology (EANO) guidelines.¹ Such guidelines often represent a multidisciplinary consensus that aims at providing guidance also in areas where evidence from conclusive clinical studies is limited or absent. Our colleagues miss a specific reference to the value of radiological growth rates.

If we did not think that the assessment of tumour growth by neuroimaging was important, we would not have recommended regular MRI scanning to determine benefit from treatment and the need for re-intervention. However, no prospective systematic outcome study informs us on how to integrate radiological growth rates into clinical decision making, notably about timepoints of interventions. Furthermore, our colleagues are at odds with our assessment of the scientific literature on the role of surgery for adult patients with glioma. Yet, our assessment of the evidence, which is a result of multidisciplinary consensus involving leading neurosurgeons in Europe, is fully consistent with the current Cochrane review,² which reinforces the need for randomised controlled clinical trials in this situation. We agree that the recent long-term follow-up on the Norwegian cohort study is suggestive of a benefit of early surgical intervention in patients with low grade gliomas across the major molecular subtypes³ and might in fact be the best evidence for a role of early surgery in this population published so far.⁴ Yet, this cohort study cannot be considered as conclusive evidence about the value of resection. Moreover, the article was not available in the public domain when we prepared the EANO guideline.¹

Finally, it is incorrect to state that cognitive function and quality of life assessments are not mentioned: they are in fact mentioned as part of the clinical examination. Furthermore, this was not the main scope of this guideline and the importance of cognitive function and quality of life in the overall management strategies for adult patients with gloma has recently been addressed in a separate EANO guideline.⁵

MIW received grants from Acceleron, Actelion, Bayer, Merck, Novocure, Pfizer, Isarna, EMD Merck Serono, and Roche; and received personal fees from BMS, Celldex, Immunocell Therapeutics, Isarna, Magforce, Merck, Northwest Biotherapeutics, Novocure, Pfizer, Roche, Teva, and Tocagen, outside of the submitted work. MvdB received grants and personal fees from Abbvie; and personal fees from Roche, Celldex, Novartis, BMS, and MSD, outside the submitted work. ICT received grants from BrainLab, outside the submitted work. REV received non-financial support from Novocure; and honoraria from Roche, Merck KGaA, MSD, Merck, and Novartis, outside of the submitted work. MP received grants from Boehringer Ingelheim, GlaxoSmithKline, Merck Sharp & Dome, and received personal fees from Bristol-Myers Squibb, Novartis, Genon Lehrman Group, CMC Contrast, GlaxoSmithKline, Mundipharma, and Roche, outside of the submitted work. OC received grants from Novocure, and received personal fees and non-financial support from Servier during the conduct of the study; and has a patent licensed (Aix Marseille University, 13/25/437/9 1405). MB received grants and personal fees from Guerbet, Novartis, and Codman; received personal fees from Roche, Teva, Bayer, and Vascular Dynamics; and received grants from Siemens, DFG, Hopp Foundation, and Styrkje, outside the submitted work. JCR received non-financial support from Roche Nederland BV, outside of the submitted work. BGB received personal fees from Merck, and received personal fees and non-financial support from Norsopharma AG, outside of the submitted work. MJBT received personal fees from Roche, outside of the submitted work. MH received non-financial support from MDxHealth, her institution received service fees from Novocure; and received consulting fees from Roche/GeneTcHa, MSD, and BMS, outside of the submitted work. MvdB received personal fees from Bristol-Myers Squibb; and received personal fees from Novocure, and Roche, outside of the submitted work. GR received grants from Roche, and Merck; and received personal fees from Amgen, and Celldex, outside of the submitted work. WW received grants and personal fees from MSD and Genentech/Roche; received grants from Apogenics, Boehringer Ingelheim, and Pfizer; and received personal fees from BMS and Celldex, outside of the submitted work. All other authors declare no competing interests.

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