Synergistic Impact of Trained Patient Advocates as a Novel Component of an Accredited Young Investigator Meeting

Joseph Vena[1], MSN, RN, Joan B. Fowler[2], PharmD, BCPP, Rebecca Weaver[2], CHCP

AstraZeneca Plc.[1] Creative Educational Concepts, Inc.[2]

Abstract

AstraZeneca Plc. (AstraZeneca) is focused on putting patients first and fostering a patient-immersed culture throughout the organization. The strategy of the AstraZeneca Medical Education Grants Office (MEGO) is to support high-quality medical education determined by the identified gaps and needs assessments of individual therapeutic areas that reaches the highest learning outcome level[1].

In this innovative project, we examine the assessment of confidence, skills/strategy, and performance of clinician-scientists via an accredited professional development and research forum with three distinct components:

- Senior MD/PhD faculty judge mentors
- Early career physician/scientist research presenters (Young Investigators), and
- Educated patient advocates in a novel role as planners and panel discussants.

The inclusion of trained patient advocates enhances competence, contributes to improved presentation performance, enriches the quality of the education, and enables Young Investigators to better translate their clinical research to patient outcomes.

Introduction

The priorities of AstraZeneca in the epidermal growth factor receptor, mutant-positive (EGFRm+), non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) therapeutic area are based on past and ongoing clinical data[2-4].

Patient advocates are increasingly sought in medical education because of their deep insight into the patient perspective and journey[5].

The incorporation of patient advocacy within medical education has the potential to increase competence in patient-centered care, provide learners knowledge in the process of legislative advocacy, and spotlight the value of patient-focused medical research[6,7].

Methods

The learning objectives were the following:

- Examine the impact of scholarly activity and clinical research on continuing professional development.
- Evaluate strengths and weaknesses of EGFRm+ NSCLC research presented by investigator peers.
- Improve public speaking and presentation skills to more effectively present research findings to the larger medical and scientific community.
- Explore “what it takes” to become a lung cancer researcher.

The medical education provider coordinated with the *EGFR Resisters* patient advocacy group to identify and recruit an Activity Chair, expert faculty judge mentors, and prospective Young Investigators for abstract submission.

The educational agenda consisted of:

- One-on-one professional coaching sessions to improve presentation skills.
- Panel discussion on professional development topics by acclaimed clinician-scientists.
- 16 Young Investigator data presentations.
- Summary presentation by the *EGFR Resisters* of ongoing and planned research collaborations.

Results

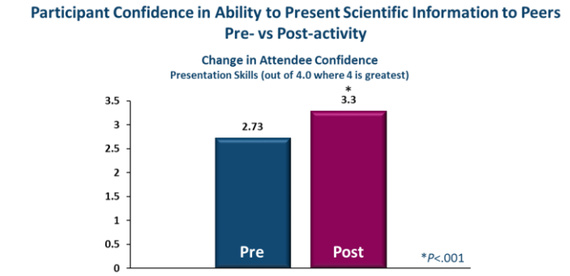
The 16 Young Investigators selected to present represented 15 diverse institutions; 54% of presenters were female.

- City of Hope Beckman Research Institute
- Columbia University
- Georgetown University
- Harvard Medical School
- MD Anderson Cancer Center
- Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center
- New York University
- Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center
- Rush University Medical Center
- Stanford University
- University Hospital of Quebec
- University of California, San Diego
- University of Chicago
- University of Illinois at Chicago
- Weill Cornell Medicine

Table 1: Young Investigator mean satisfaction score of the professional development and mentoring sessions (4.0 scale)

Professional Development/Mentoring	Mean Score
Presentation Skills Coaching Workshop	**3.82**
Professional Development Panel Discussion	**3.75**
EGFR Resisters Dinner Presentation	**3.91**
Meet-the-Professor Mentoring Lunch	**4.00**

Figures 1 and 2: Young Investigator mean confidence scores, pre-activity and post-activity (4.0 scale)



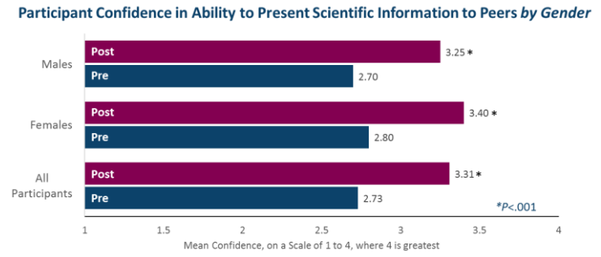
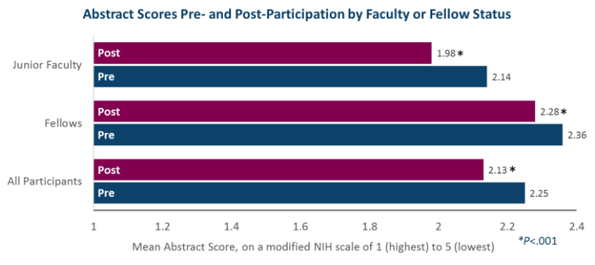


Figure 3: Young Investigator mean abstract scores, pre- and post-activity (4.0 scale)



Conclusions

Trained patient advocates have been shown to augment translational research.[8] This project demonstrated their role in the early career professional development of lung cancer clinician-scientists.

Young Investigators reported a statistically significant increase in both confidence and performance by presenting scientific information after participating in the EGFR Research Summit.

All Young Investigators expressed a lack of experience with NIH grant writing as a barrier to funding their research. This was addressed by the faculty in a robust professional development workshop.

The metrics highlight the impact of the EGFR Research Summit on advancing the professional development of the next generation of clinician-scientists and the value in continuing to advance substantive research in EGFRm+ NSCLC.

References

1. Moore DE Jr, Green JS, Gallis HA. Achieving desired results and improved outcomes: Integrating planning and assessment throughout learning activities. *J Contin Educ Health Prof.* 2009;29(1):1-15.
2. Soria JC, Ohe Y, Vansteenkiste, J. Osimertinib in untreated EGFR-mutated advanced non-small cell lung cancer. *N Engl J Med.* 2018;378:113-25.
3. Mok TS, Wu YL, Ahn MJ, Garassino MC, Kim HR, Ramalingam SS, et al. Osimertinib or platinum-pemetrexed in EGFR T790 M-positive lung cancer. *New Engl J Med.* 2017;376(7):629–40.
4. Reungwetwattana T, Nakagawa K, Cho BC, Cobo M, Cho EK, Bertolini A, et al. CNS response to osimertinib versus standard epidermal growth factor receptor tyrosine kinase inhibitors in patients with untreated EGFR-mutated advanced non-small cell lung cancer. *J Clin Oncol.* 2018;36(33):3290-3297.
5. Croft D, Jay S, Meslin E, Gaffney M, Odell J. Is it time for advocacy training in medical education? *Acad Med.* 2012;87(9):1165-1170.
6. Bloom BS. Effects of continuing medical education on improving physician clinical care and patient health: a review of systematic reviews. *Int J Technol Assess Health Care*. 2005;21(3):380-385.
7. Miller GE. The assessment of clinical skills/competence/performance. *Acad Med.* 1990;65(9 suppl):S63-67.
8. Ciccarella A, Staley AC, Franco AT. Transforming research: engaging patient advocates at all stages of cancer research. *Ann Transl Med.* 2018;6(9):167.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank Jill Feldman, MA; Ivy Elkins, MBA; and Ildiko Medve, MD, Founding Members of the *EGFR Resisters*, for their ongoing investment in improving clinical trial design in lung cancer, commitment to translating findings from the “bench to the bedside” to a worldwide patient base, and continued passion and enthusiasm that inspires clinician-scientists and all of us.

Supported by AstraZeneca

In collaboration with CEC oncology

Presented at the Alliance Industry Summit, Alliance for Continuing Medical Education in the Health Professions; 01 May 2020

For questions, please contact
Joseph Vena, AstraZeneca Plc., joseph.vena@astrazeneca.com, or,
Dr. Joan Fowler, Creative Educational Concepts, jfowler@ceconcepts.com