

Gilead: Initiates Momelotinib (Jak Inhibitor) Phase II Study in Front-Line Pancreatic Cancer, OS Data Expected in 2H16

A new trial for Gilead's Jak inhibitor momelotinib has been posted on clinicalTrials.gov and is notably the first study that will test the drug in the solid tumor setting following the positive indications of activity for Incyte's Jakafi in pancreatic cancer.

Following a dose-finding lead-in phase, the phase II study will test momelotinib or placebo on top of the standard of care, Abraxane/gemcitabine, in front-line pancreatic cancer. Readout of the primary overall survival endpoint is expected around 2H16. Given the large size of the study (336 patients), we believe the trial is likely to be at least partially registrational-enabling.

It is notable that Gilead is testing its Jak inhibitor in the front-line pancreatic cancer setting, as Incyte has not planned to test Jakafi in this setting given the additive myelosuppressive effects of Jakafi. We believe Gilead's ability to move momelotinib into earlier line solid tumor indications, where myelosuppressive chemotherapy is more of the standard of care will provide them with the potential advantage of being able to target the broadest solid tumor opportunity, a key attribute of the drug that we believe remains underappreciated.

The inclusion criteria in the ClinicalTrials.gov posting do not appear to limit the enrollment to patients with inflammatory biomarkers who may derive more benefit from a Jak, but we believe Gilead is very likely to explore relative efficacy in subgroups with high CRP or IL6 levels.

Source: Wells Fargo Securities/Abrahams, April 2, 2014

Oncology Indication: Pancreatic

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