

Trastuzumab has become standard of care in the treatment of early and metastatic HER2-positive breast cancer. Initially trastuzumab could only be administered intravenously (IV), however since a few years there is also a subcutaneous (SC) formulation” Tjalma et al (2017).

Abstract:

Trastuzumab has become standard of care in the treatment of early and metastatic HER2-positive breast cancer. Initially trastuzumab could only be administered intravenously (IV), however since a few years there is also a subcutaneous (SC) formulation. The efficacy and the safety profile of both formulations is the comparable. The administration logistics however have an impact on the patients, the health care professionals (HCPs), the hospital and the government.

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The preference for the patients (89%) and the HCPs (77%) is in favour of the SC formulation. The patient chair time per cycle, as defined by the time between entry and exit of infusion chair, is between 53 and 122 minutes shorter for SC administration. Also, the time actively dedicated by the HCP on preparation and administration SC, is between 17 and 50 minutes shorter per cycle. These time savings may increase the capacity of an oncological day clinic and reduce waiting lists. An additional benefit is that the use of SC formulation reduces the consumables and the waste. When the SC form was given at home instead of in the hospital the safety profile remained the same, but the satisfaction rate improved further for both the patients and the HCPs. The next and final step will be potentially to invest in teaching the patients to self-administer the medication. The home administration and the education of the patients and the HCPs will have a cost price and it will be interesting to see how the hospital financial authorities and the government will deal with this situation in the time of budgetary restrictions.

Full Text

Reference:

Tjalma, W., Huizing, M.T. and Papadimitriou, K. (2017) The smooth and bumpy road of trastuzumab administration: from intravenous (IV) in a hospital to subcutaneous (SC) at home. *Facts, Views & Vision in ObGyn.* 9(1), p.51-55.

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