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## **INTERNATIONAL CRICKETER KEVIN PIETERSEN BACKS NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR PIONEERING CANCER TREATMENT**

### **Patients with ocular melanoma denied access to life-extending procedure on NHS**

International cricketing superstar, Kevin Pietersen MBE, is supporting a national campaign to gain access to a pioneering cancer treatment for people with the most common form of eye cancer, ocular melanoma (OM), whose disease has spread to the liver.

Pietersen's charity, the KP24 Foundation, has joined forces with the eye cancer charity OcuMel UK to put pressure on NHS England and policymakers to provide access to this novel treatment known as chemosaturation - or percutaneous hepatic perfusion (PHP) - which halts or slows down progression of cancerous tumours in the liver.<sup>1,2</sup>

"Liver metastasis is the major cause of death among people with ocular melanoma," says Kathryn Curtis, General Manager, OcuMel UK. "Currently OM patients with advanced metastatic liver disease have limited treatment options and only ten percent are suitable for surgery. Once the cancer has spread to the liver, without treatment average survival is approximately 4 months."

Chemosaturation allows doctors to deliver very high doses of chemotherapy to the liver without entering the bloodstream and damaging healthy parts of the body. The technique involves using two small balloons to isolate the liver from the rest of the body for approximately 30 minutes while delivering the chemotherapy agent, melphalan, directly into the organ. Once the drug has been delivered, blood from the liver is filtered to help reduce toxicity and returned to the patient via a catheter into the jugular vein. The whole procedure takes approximately two and a half to three hours.<sup>3</sup>

"Data has shown that patients who receive chemosaturation survive significantly longer than those who have received other treatments including systemic chemotherapy, etc. Our experience has been very positive since the first treatment in September 2012 with many patients alive and well after two years. Additionally we have found that patients tolerate this treatment very well staying for just one or two nights in hospital," says Dr Brian Stedman, Consultant Interventional Oncologist, University Hospital Southampton.

Additionally data presented at the Society of Surgical Oncology (SSO) conference in March 2015 reported the experiences from Moffitt Cancer Centre with a median OS (overall survival) of 736 days compared to 285 and 265 days for the other two treatments involved.<sup>4</sup>

An application for funding for the procedure was made via NHS England's 'Commissioning through Evaluation' programme in November 2013. Yet despite strong support among the clinical community, extensive delays in the process have meant the procedure is still not available on the NHS.

"It is estimated that 75 OM patients with advanced liver cancer have missed out on the treatment during this period," adds Dr Stedman.

A further meeting is anticipated to discuss key data on chemosaturating with NHS England on 17<sup>th</sup> April.

Commenting on the campaign, Kevin Pietersen MBE, says: "My best friend Jon Cole Edwards recently died from ocular melanoma which had spread to the liver. This treatment is truly ground-breaking and patients should not be denied access."

OcuMel UK is a registered charity supporting those affected by ocular melanoma. For more information visit: [www.ocumeluk.org](http://www.ocumeluk.org)

As well as being 100% committed to supporting OcuMel UK, KP24 Foundation supports young people all over the globe have better opportunities in life through sport and education, opening doors that would have previously been firmly closed. More info can be found at [www.kp24foundation.com](http://www.kp24foundation.com) and @kp24foundation

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Note to editors:

**About ocular melanoma**

Ocular melanoma (OM) – also known as uveal melanoma - is the most common form of eye cancer. It occurs along the uveal tract of the eye, which includes the choroid, ciliary body and iris. There are approximately 450 to 600 new cases of OM in the UK each year. Around half of people with OM will develop incurable metastatic disease – nine out of ten in the liver.<sup>5,6,7</sup>

The symptoms of OM include a sudden blurring of vision and seeing flashing lights and shadows. However, sometimes it doesn't cause any symptoms and is picked up during a routine eye test. It can affect men, women and children of any age. The exact cause is unknown.<sup>5,6,7</sup>

**About Chemosaturation (PHP – Percutaneous Hepatic Perfusion)**

Chemosaturation is repeatable due to the minimally invasive techniques used.<sup>1,2,3</sup> The technology has been perfected over the last three years by an expert team based at Southampton University Hospital. It is also currently available at Aintree University Hospital, Liverpool, and The Spire Hospital, Southampton. Other centres are looking to establish chemosaturation at their locations.

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