

A summary of the STAMPEDE Trial by Dr Heather Payne

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STAMPEDE (Systematic Therapy in Advancing Metastatic Prostate cancer: Evaluation of Drug Efficacy) is a multi-arm multi-stage international randomised controlled trial to assess the safety and effectiveness of treatment with hormone therapy using three additional drugs, docetaxel, zoledronic acid and celecoxib. Docetaxel (Taxotere) is a chemotherapy drug that is now used to treat those with advanced prostate cancer and is available on the NHS; zoledronic acid (Zometa) slows the release of calcium from the bones and may protect them; celecoxib (Celebrex) is an aspirin-like drug that has been mainly used as a relief for arthritis and may affect the cancer.

The trial is for men newly diagnosed with advanced prostate cancer, including those where the cancer has spread to the bones. It may also suit some previously treated men who may have PSA doubling times of less than six months.

The trial is open to recruitment across the UK and is expanding at the moment with more centres are coming on board.

If you would be interested to join this trial, you should discuss your situation with your consultant and ask to be referred to one of the participating hospitals. Some people join trials because they feel that they might benefit more from the treatments under study; some people join trials because they want to help men like themselves in the future; some people join trials because they feel that their condition will be monitored more closely (and at no extra cost to themselves). Any man who joins a trial can leave the trial at any time.

With around 650 patients registered to date, the trial has now moved from the Pilot phase to the Efficacy Stage I. The eventual target is to recruit about 3,300 patients. The trial is run from the Medical Research Council Clinical Trials Unit and is funded by Cancer Research UK.

The figure below shows the five research 'arms' that will be used, together with the 'Control arm' (i.e. those on standard hormone therapy treatment only).

Design: Multi-arm multi-stage randomised controlled trial with 5 experimental arms and 5 stages.

