

## Non-technical abstract

The purpose of this research study is to find out what effects OncoVEX<sup>GM-CSF</sup> has on inoperable melanoma. Also the safety and feasibility of giving OncoVEX<sup>GM-CSF</sup> will be assessed. This study is testing a potential therapy which combines both vaccine and direct tumour killing effects for the treatment of inoperable melanoma that is stage III (the melanoma has spread to the lymph glands) or stage IV (the melanoma has spread further than the lymph glands) following injection of OncoVEX<sup>GM-CSF</sup> into tumours. Patients will therefore be observed for evidence of both modes of action. Previously, therapeutic products have been tested in man which are either intended to kill tumour cells by tumour selective virus replication or which induce an anti-tumour immune response. OncoVEX<sup>GM-CSF</sup> is one of the first products to combine both activities and is therefore hoped to have a greater effect than when these different approaches are used on their own.

The pharmaceutical company involved in this study, BioVex Limited, is the manufacturer of OncoVEX<sup>GM-CSF</sup>.

OncoVEX is a virus that has been genetically modified to grow selectively in cancer cells. It has also been further modified to deliver a human gene for a substance called GMCSF which is intended to signal the immune system to attack the cancer. The combination of the virus growing in the cancer cells selectively (ie not in normal cells) and the GMCSF signal to the immune system against the cancer resulted in the destruction of cancer in animals and protected against new tumour growth. A Phase I clinical trial in the UK demonstrated a good safety profile of the product and provided evidence of an anti-tumour effect. The current proposal aims to build on this work to test the product in a larger number of patients with malignant melanoma such that the effects of the product can be more thoroughly assessed.