

**TITLE:** Gastrointestinal stromal tumours receiving imatinib therapy 2001-2005: outcome and assessment in accordance with the Scottish GIST guidelines

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**ABSTRACT:**

**Introduction:** The tyrosine kinase inhibitor Glivec (imatinib) is licensed for the treatment of inoperable and metastatic gastrointestinal stromal tumours (GIST). National guidelines now exist in order to optimise the diagnosis and management of these rare tumours, including the monitoring of imatinib therapy.

**Objective:** To evaluate the outcome and compliance with the national guidelines of patients treated with imatinib in our institution.

**Methods:** Retrospective review of medical records of 25 patients commenced on Glivec between July 2001 and July 2005.

**Results** 25 patients with a median age of 63 years received imatinib therapy over a four year period, 19 with metastatic involvement and 6 with locally advanced disease. Full baseline assessment consisting of FBC and LFTs, recording of WHO performance status and concomitant medication was fully documented in just over 50% of cases. Compliance with initial monitoring of therapy weeks 1-6, as recommended in the guidelines, was 48.5% for weight, 62% for FBC and 61% for LFTs and toxicity. Radiological staging and reassessment was mainly in the form of CT rather than PET and 19 out of 22 patients surviving 3 months or more had restaging within 3 months as per protocol. 13 patients developed evidence of progression of which only 2 proceeded to dose escalation. 5 patients required a dose adjustment or interruption, all of which adhered to protocol. Grade 3 or 4 toxicity was documented in 3 patients with one suspected treatment related death. The median progression free and overall survivals are 19 and 30 months.

**Conclusion:** The staging and dose alteration policy in our institution closely follows that of the national guidelines. Documentation of baseline monitoring and weekly assessment has improved since the guidelines were published but the introduction of a checklist could prove useful.