CONCISE REPORT

Riociguat for the treatment of pulmonary arterial hypertension associated with connective tissue disease: results from PATENT-1 and PATENT-2

Marc Humbert,1,2,3 J Gerry Coghlan,4 Hossein-Ardeschir Ghofrani,5,6 Friedrich Grimminger,5 Jian-Guo He,7 Gabriela Riemekasten,8 Carmine Dario Vizza,9 Annette Boeckenhoff,10 Christian Meier,11 Janethe de Oliveira Pena,12 Christopher P Denton13

ABSTRACT

Background The 12-week, phase III Pulmonary Arterial hyperTENsion sGC-stimulator Trial (PATENT)-1 study investigated riociguat in patients with pulmonary arterial hypertension (PAH). Here, we present a prospectively planned analysis of the safety and efficacy of riociguat in the subgroup of patients with PAH associated with connective tissue disease (PAH-CTD).

Methods Patients with PAH-CTD were further classified post hoc as having PAH associated with systemic sclerosis or PAH-other defined CTD. In PATENT-1, patients received riociguat (maximum 2.5 or 1.5 mg three times daily) or placebo. Efficacy endpoints included change from baseline in 6-minute walking distance (6MWD; primary endpoint), haemodynamics and WHO functional class (WHO FC). In the long-term extension PATENT-2, patients received riociguat (maximum 2.5 mg three times daily); the primary endpoint was safety and tolerability.

Results In patients with PAH-CTD, riociguat increased mean 6MWD, WHO FC, pulmonary vascular resistance and cardiac index. Improvements in 6MWD and WHO FC persisted at 2 years. Two-year survival of patients with PAH-CTD was the same as for idiopathic PAH (93%). Riociguat had a similar safety profile in patients with PAH-CTD to that of the overall population.

Conclusions Riociguat was well tolerated and associated with positive trends in 6MWD and other endpoints that were sustained at 2 years in patients with PAH-CTD.

Trial registration numbers PATENT-1 (NCT00810693), PATENT-2 (NCT00863681).

INTRODUCTION

Pulmonary arterial hypertension (PAH) is a complication of connective tissue disease (CTD) that results from remodelling of the pulmonary vasculature, ultimately leading to right ventricular failure and death.1–3 Many CTDs can lead to the development of PAH (PAH-CTD), including systemic sclerosis (SSc), systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) and mixed CTD.4 Patients with PAH-CTD have a poorer prognosis compared with patients with idiopathic PAH (IPAH), and patients with PAH associated with SSc (PAH-SSc) have worse survival rates than those with non-SSc PAH-CTD.5,6

Recommended treatments for PAH-CTD include prostanooids, phosphodiesterase type 5 (PDE5) inhibitors and endothelin receptor antagonists (ERAs). However, the response to PAH-specific therapy is often reduced in patients with PAH-CTD (particularly PAH-SSc) compared with IPAH.3,7

Riociguat, a soluble guanylate cyclase stimulator, is approved for the treatment of PAH. In addition to its vasorelaxant properties, riociguat has been shown to have antifibrotic, antiproliferative and anti-inflammatory effects in preclinical models, providing a rationale for its use in PAH-CTD.8,9

In the phase III Pulmonary Arterial hyperTENsion sGC-stimulator Trial (PATENT)-1 study (NCT00810693) in patients with PAH of various aetiologies, including patients with PAH-CTD, riociguat was well tolerated and improved 6-minute walking distance (6MWD) and several secondary outcomes.10 The improvements in 6MWD and WHO functional class (WHO FC) were maintained at 2 years in the PATENT-2 open-label extension (NCT00863681).11 Here, we present a prospectively planned analysis of the safety and efficacy of riociguat in the subgroup of patients with PAH-CTD in PATENT-1 and PATENT-2.
RESULTS
Patients and baseline characteristics
Of the 443 patients randomised and treated in PATENT-1, 111 patients had PAH-CTD, of whom 66 had PAH-SSc and 39 had PAH-other defined CTD (18 associated with SLE; 11 associated with rheumatoid arthritis/disorder; 10 associated with mixed/other CTD), and 6 had PAH associated with an unspecified CTD, as further medical history data were not available. Owing to low patient numbers, data are not shown for patients with PAH associated with an unspecified CTD.

Demographics, baseline characteristics and background therapy for patients with PAH-CTD in PATENT-1 are shown in table 1. Patient disposition for the subgroup with PAH-CTD in PATENT-1 is shown in online supplementary figure S1. Of the 111 patients with PAH-CTD in PATENT-1, 94 (85%) completed PATENT-1 and entered PATENT-2. Mean±SD treatment duration for the PAH-CTD population in PATENT-2 was 31±14 months. For the PAH-SSc and PAH-other defined CTD subgroups, mean treatment duration was 29±15 months and 35±12 months, respectively.

Efficacy
The 2.5 mg maximum group
In the PAH-CTD population at week 12, riociguat 2.5 mg maximum increased mean±SD 6MWD by +18±51 m compared with a decrease of −8±110 m in the placebo group (see online supplementary figure S2A) (LS mean treatment difference: +28 m; 95% CI −4 to 61 m). Patients with PAH-SSc

Table 1 Disease characteristics and demographics in patients with PAH-CTD at PATENT-1 baseline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Overall PAH-CTD (n=111)</th>
<th>PAH-SSc (n=66)</th>
<th>PAH-other defined CTD (n=39)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age, mean±SD (years)</td>
<td>57±14</td>
<td>63±11</td>
<td>50±14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female, n (%)</td>
<td>98 (88)</td>
<td>57 (86)</td>
<td>36 (92)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time from first diagnosis of PH, mean±SD (months)</td>
<td>27±36</td>
<td>26±35</td>
<td>26±38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6MWD, mean±SD (m)</td>
<td>352±75</td>
<td>340±76</td>
<td>364±74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHO FC VIII/III/II/I (%)*</td>
<td>5/36/57/3†</td>
<td>2/35/59/3†</td>
<td>10/36/54/0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAH-specific pretreatment, n (%)</td>
<td>70 (63%)</td>
<td>45 (68)</td>
<td>23 (59)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretreated with ERA</td>
<td>59 (53)</td>
<td>39 (59)</td>
<td>19 (49)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretreated with PCA</td>
<td>10 (9)</td>
<td>6 (9)</td>
<td>3 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretreated with ERA and PCA</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immunomodulating pretreatment, n (%)</td>
<td>27 (24)</td>
<td>16 (24)</td>
<td>10 (26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretreated with immunosuppressive agents§</td>
<td>21 (19)</td>
<td>13 (20)</td>
<td>8 (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretreated with antineoplastic agents¶</td>
<td>14 (13)</td>
<td>6 (9)</td>
<td>7 (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretreated with endocrine therapy**</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>1 (2)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretreated with other immunomodulating agents</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Not all percentages add up to 100 due to rounding.
†Data missing for one patient.
‡Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs or disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs.
§Azathioprine, leflunomide, methotrexate, mizoribine, mycophenolate mofetil, mycophenolate sodium, tacrolimus.
¶Celecoxib, cyclophosphamide, methotrexate.
**Estradiol valerate.
6MWD, 6-minute walking distance; CTD, connective tissue disease; ERA, endothelin receptor antagonist; PAH, pulmonary arterial hypertension; PCA, prostacyclin analogue; PH, pulmonary hypertension; SSc, systemic sclerosis; WHO FC, WHO functional class.
receiving riociguat reported a smaller increase in 6MWD (+4 ±43 m), but there was a larger decrease in the placebo group (−37±120 m) at week 12 (LS mean difference: +43 m; 95% CI 1 to 86 m) (see online supplementary figure S2B). The PAH-other defined CTD subgroup showed similar improvements in the riociguat and placebo groups at week 12 (see online supplementary figure S2C). Patients who were treatment-naive, pretreated and patients with concomitant immunosuppressant use showed similar changes from baseline in mean±SD 6MWD at week 12 (21±53, 17±50 and 14±63, respectively, see online supplementary tables S1 and S2). In PATENT-2, improvements in 6MWD were largely maintained at 2 years in the PAH-CTD, PAH-SSc and PAH-other defined CTD groups (see online supplementary figure S3).

At week 12 in the PAH-CTD population, the proportion of patients in whom WHO FC had improved or stabilised was 97% in the riociguat group versus 75% in the placebo group (see online supplementary figure S4). Results were similar in the PAH-SSc and PAH-other defined CTD subgroups (see online supplementary figure S4). At 2 years of PATENT-2, WHO FC had improved/stabilised/worsened in 36%/59%/6% of patients in the PAH-CTD population.

Haemodynamics, N-terminal prohormone of brain natriuretic peptide (NT-proBNP) and quality-of-life endpoints are shown in table 2. Riociguat improved pulmonary vascular resistance (PVR) and cardiac index to a greater extent versus placebo in the PAH-CTD population (table 2); similar results were seen in the PAH-SSc and PAH-other defined CTD subgroups, although the effect was less pronounced in the PAH-SSc subgroup (33%) compared with the PAH-other defined CTD subgroup (24%). Twelve (13%) deaths occurred in the PAH-CTD population in PATENT-2, six (6%) of whom had PAH-SSc. At 2 years, survival rates for patients with idiopathic/familial PAH and PAH-CTD were both 93% (see online supplementary figure S6).

Clinical and epidemiological research

The 1.5 mg maximum group
Changes in efficacy endpoints in patients with PAH-CTD in the exploratory riociguat 1.5 mg maximum group are shown in online supplementary table S5.

Clinical worsening
In PATENT-2, clinical worsening (hospitalisation, decrease in 6MWD or persistent worsening of WHO FC due to pulmonary hypertension (PH), start of new PH treatment or death) occurred in 29% of patients with PAH-CTD (see online supplementary figure S5) with events occurring more frequently in the PAH-SSc subgroup (33%) compared with the PAH-other defined CTD subgroup (24%). Twelve (13%) deaths occurred in the PAH-CTD population in PATENT-2, six (6%) of whom had PAH-SSc. At 2 years, survival rates for patients with idiopathic/familial PAH and PAH-CTD were both 93% (see online supplementary figure S6).

Safety
Adverse events (AEs) and serious adverse events (SAEs) occurring in the PAH-CTD population during PATENT-1 are shown in table 3. The frequency of AEs was comparable in the PAH-CTD population and the subgroups. No cases of haemoptysis or pulmonary haemorrhage occurred in patients with PAH-CTD in PATENT-1. One (1%) death, resulting from

Table 3 AEs and SAEs in the overall population and in patients with PAH-CTD in PATENT-1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Overall PATENT-1</th>
<th>Overall PAH-CTD</th>
<th>PAH-SSc</th>
<th>PAH-other defined CTD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any AE</td>
<td>285 (90)</td>
<td>108 (86)</td>
<td>82 (95)</td>
<td>24 (96)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any AE experienced by ≥20% patients in any CTD group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headache</td>
<td>89 (28)</td>
<td>25 (20)</td>
<td>26 (30)</td>
<td>9 (36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nausea</td>
<td>50 (16)</td>
<td>16 (13)</td>
<td>21 (24)</td>
<td>3 (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peripheral oedema</td>
<td>58 (18)</td>
<td>14 (11)</td>
<td>16 (19)</td>
<td>5 (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dizziness</td>
<td>55 (17)</td>
<td>15 (12)</td>
<td>15 (17)</td>
<td>3 (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diarrhoea</td>
<td>41 (13)</td>
<td>13 (10)</td>
<td>13 (15)</td>
<td>6 (24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anaemia</td>
<td>22 (7)</td>
<td>3 (2)</td>
<td>12 (14)</td>
<td>3 (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pyrexia</td>
<td>14 (4)</td>
<td>4 (3)</td>
<td>10 (12)</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discontinuation due to AE</td>
<td>9 (3)</td>
<td>7 (9)</td>
<td>3 (3)</td>
<td>4 (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AEs of special interest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypotension</td>
<td>27 (9)</td>
<td>3 (2)</td>
<td>9 (10)</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syncope</td>
<td>3 (1)</td>
<td>5 (4)</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>0 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any SAE</td>
<td>40 (13)</td>
<td>23 (18)</td>
<td>14 (16)</td>
<td>7 (28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAEs experienced by ≥5% patients in any CTD group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right ventricular failure</td>
<td>5 (2)</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>2 (2)</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyspnoea</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>0 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worsening PAH</td>
<td>2 (1)</td>
<td>2 (2)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>2 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discontinuation due to SAE</td>
<td>5 (2)</td>
<td>7 (6)</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>3 (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaths</td>
<td>3 (1)</td>
<td>3 (2)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AE, adverse event; CTD, connective tissue disease; PAH, pulmonary arterial hypertension; SAE, serious adverse event; SSC, systemic sclerosis.


3
worsening PH, was reported in a patient with PAH-SSc receiving placebo.

AEs, SAEs and discontinuations were similar for the overall PATENT-2 population and the PAH-CTD subgroup, although most AEs occurred more frequently in patients with PAH-CTD and patients with concomitant immunosuppressant use (see online supplementary table S6). The most common SAEs in the pooled riociguat groups in the PAH-CTD population were pneumonia (3%) and right ventricular failure (2%). In PATENT-2, 1 (1%) patient with PAH-CTD experienced an SAE of haemoptysis compared with 13 (3%) patients in the overall population. A similar safety profile to that of the PAH-CTD population was observed in the subgroups.

DISCUSSION

Riociguat improved several efficacy endpoints in patients with PAH-CTD including 6MWD, WHO FC, PVR and cardiac index, although improvements were less pronounced than in the overall PATENT-1 population. This is consistent with previous observations that patients with PAH-CTD respond less well to PAH-specific therapy than patients with IPAH.4,6 The efficacy results presented in this analysis appear comparable with previous analyses of long-term outcomes are subject to survivor bias.

PATENT-1 and PATENT-2 were not designed to detect statistical differences in subgroups. Moreover, the analysis is limited due to the post hoc subclassification of patients with PAH-CTD by patients’ medical histories using MedDRA terms. Also, as with most long-term trial data, it is possible that the analyses of long-term outcomes are subject to survivor bias. Finally, the low patient numbers in the PAH-SSc and PAH-other defined CTD subgroups should be taken into consideration when interpreting the data.

In conclusion, riociguat was well tolerated in patients with PAH-CTD and led to improvement or stabilisation in 6MWD, WHO FC and haemodynamics. The 2-year survival rate of patients with PAH-CTD or PAH-SSc was similar to that of patients with idiopathic/familial PAH.

Author affiliations

1Université Paris-Sud, Faculté de Médecine, Université Paris-Saclay, Le Kremlin Bicêtre, France
2AP-HP, Service de Pneumologie, Hôpital Bicêtre, Le Kremlin Bicêtre, France
3Inserm UMR_999, Hôpital Marie Lannelongue, Le Plesis Robinson, France
4Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust, London, UK
5University of Giessen and Marburg Lung Center (member of the German Center of Lung Research (DZL)), Giessen, Germany
6Department of Medicine, Imperial College London, London, UK
7Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences and Peking Union Medical College, Beijing, China
8Department of Rheumatology, University of Lübeck, Lübeck, Germany
9La Sapienza University of Rome, Rome, Italy
10Bayer Pharma AG, Wuppertal, Germany
11Bayer Pharma AG, Berlin, Germany
12Bayer HealthCare Pharmaceuticals Inc, Whippany, New Jersey, USA
13University College London, Royal Free Campus, London, UK

Contributors

MH, JGC, H-AG, FG, J-GH and CDV were PATENT-1 investigators directly involved in the recruitment and care of the participants; CPD, MH and CM contributed to the post hoc classification of patients; all authors contributed to the analysis and interpretation of the data, and contributed to the writing and revision of the manuscript for intellectual content, and have reviewed and approved the final version for submission.

Funding

This study was supported by Bayer Pharma AG, Berlin, Germany. Editorial support was provided by Adelphi Communications Ltd, Bollington, UK, supported by Bayer Pharma AG.

Competing interests

MH has received grants or fees for congress participation, advisory and expert board meetings, and/or research from Actelion, Bayer, GSK, Novartis and Pfizer, all related to the development of drugs in the field of pulmonary hypertension. CPD has been a consultant to Bayer, Roche, GSK, Actelion, Inventiva, CSL Behring, Takeda, Merck Serono, Medimmune and Boehringer. He has received research grants from Actelion, GSK, Novartis and CSL Behring. JGC has consulted to Actelion, GSK, Novartis and CSL Behring. J-GH has received consultancy fees and honoraria from Actelion, GSK, Bayer, United Therapeutics, Endothorax and Pfizer, and unrestricted grants from Actelion and GSK. J-GH has received fees for participation in advisory boards from Bayer. CDV has received grants or fees for congress participation, advisory boards and research from Actelion, Bayer, GSK, Lilly, Pfizer and UTEL AB and CM are employees of Bayer Pharma AG. J-GH is an employee of Bayer HealthCare Pharmaceuticals.

Ethics approval

The Institutional Review Board at each participating centre approved the protocol. Data were collected according to Good Clinical Practice guidelines at the investigation sites.

Provenance and peer review

Not commissioned; externally peer reviewed.

Open Access

This is an Open Access article distributed in accordance with the Creative Commons Attribution Non Commercial (CC BY-NC 4.0) license, which permits others to distribute, remix, adapt, build upon this work non-commercially, and license their derivative works on different terms, provided the original work is properly cited and the use is non-commercial. See: http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/

REFERENCES


Riociguat for the treatment of pulmonary arterial hypertension associated with connective tissue disease: results from PATENT-1 and PATENT-2

Marc Humbert, J Gerry Coghlan, Hossein-Ardeshir Ghofrani, Friedrich Grimminger, Jian-Guo He, Gabriela Riemekasten, Carmine Dario Vizza, Annette Boeckenhoff, Christian Meier, Janethe de Oliveira Pena and Christopher P Denton

Ann Rheum Dis published online July 25, 2016

Updated information and services can be found at:
http://ard.bmj.com/content/early/2016/07/25/annrheumdis-2015-209087

These include:

References
This article cites 19 articles, 7 of which you can access for free at:
http://ard.bmj.com/content/early/2016/07/25/annrheumdis-2015-209087#BIBL

Open Access
This is an Open Access article distributed in accordance with the Creative Commons Attribution Non Commercial (CC BY-NC 4.0) license, which permits others to distribute, remix, adapt, build upon this work non-commercially, and license their derivative works on different terms, provided the original work is properly cited and the use is non-commercial. See: http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/

Email alerting service
Receive free email alerts when new articles cite this article. Sign up in the box at the top right corner of the online article.

Topic Collections
Articles on similar topics can be found in the following collections

Open access (640)

Notes

To request permissions go to:
http://group.bmj.com/group/rights-licensing/permissions

To order reprints go to:
http://journals.bmj.com/cgi/reprintform

To subscribe to BMJ go to:
http://group.bmj.com/subscribe/