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14. ABSTRACT <p><u>1. Contingency Preparedness:</u> Collect information from transplant centers, build awareness of the Transplant Center Contingency Planning Committee and educate the transplant community about the critical importance of establishing a nationwide contingency response plan.</p> <p><u>2. Rapid Identification of Matched Donors:</u> Increase operational efficiencies that accelerate the search process and increase patient access are key to preparedness in a contingency event.</p> <p><u>3. Immunogenic Studies:</u> Increase understanding of the immunologic factors important in HSC transplantation.</p> <p><u>4. Clinical Research in Transplantation:</u> Create a platform that facilitates multicenter collaboration and data management.</p>					
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DEVELOPMENT OF MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY
FOR CONTINGENCY RESPONSE TO MARROW TOXIC AGENTS
QUARTERLY RESEARCH PERFORMANCE REPORT
SUBMITTED April 15th, 2021

Office of Naval Research

And

The National Marrow Donor Program®

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I. Heading

PI: Steven Devine, M.D.

National Marrow Donor Program

N00014-20-1-2705

Development of Medical Technology for Contingency Response to Marrow Toxic Agents

II. Scientific and Technical Objectives

The main goal of all activities funded through this grant is to develop, test and mature the ability of the NMDP Coordinating Center and NMDP contracted network sites network sites to address contingency events wherein civilian or military personnel are exposed to marrow toxic agents, primarily ionizing radiation or chemical weapons containing nitrogen mustard. As a result of prior efforts in this regard a solid foundation has been established. The proposed new activities will continue to enhance and expand our capabilities in each of the four focus areas. Contingency preparedness activities will continue to integrate NMDP's role with federal, state and local agencies.

An accident, a military incident, or a terrorist act in which a number of individuals are exposed to marrow toxic agents will result in injuries from mild to lethal. But the extent of individual injuries and the likelihood of recovery in many cases will not be apparent until days or weeks after the event. Casualties will be triaged by first responders, and those with major marrow injuries who will need aggressive medical support and may be ultimately candidates for hematopoietic cell transplantation (HCT) will need to be identified. While these patients are being supported, HCT donor identification activities will be initiated because it will not be initially clear which ones may ultimately require HCT. NMDP-approved transplant centers will provide a uniform and consistent clinical foundation for receiving, evaluating and caring for casualties. NMDP Coordinating Center will orchestrate the selection and testing necessary to rapidly identify the best available donor or cord blood unit for each patient utilizing its state-of-the-art communication infrastructure, sample repository, laboratory network, and human leukocyte antigen (HLA) expertise. NMDP's on-going immunobiologic and clinical research activities promote studies to advance the science and technology of HCT transplantation to improve outcome and quality of life for the patients.

Importantly, most individuals with near-lethal marrow toxic injuries will recover their own marrow function provided they receive intensive supportive care from the medical professionals that are part of the contingency response community.¹ These professionals can save the lives of persons with severe marrow suppression using the knowledge and skills practiced every day to treat patients undergoing HCT coordinated through the NMDP.

III. Approach

A. Contingency Preparedness

HCT teams are uniquely positioned to care for the casualties of marrow toxic injuries. The NMDP manages a network of centers that work in concert to facilitate unrelated HCT. The Radiation Injury Treatment Network (RITN), comprised of a subset of NMDP's network centers, is dedicated to radiological disaster preparedness activities and develops procedures for response to marrow toxic mass casualty incidents.

B. Development of Science and Technology for Rapid Identification of Matched Donors
Disease stage at the time of transplantation is a significant predictor of survival, decreasing the time to identify the best matched donor is critical. Methods are under development to rapidly provide the best matched donor for HCT.

C. Immunogenetic Studies in Transplantation
Improving strategies to avoid and manage complications due to graft alloreactivity is essential to improve the outcomes of HCT. Research efforts are focused on strategies to maximize disease control while minimizing the toxicity related to alloreactivity in HCT.

D. Clinical Research in Transplantation
Clinical research creates a platform that facilitates multi-center collaboration and data management to address issues important for managing radiation exposure casualties. Advancing the already robust research capabilities of the NMDP network will facilitate a coordinated and effective contingency response.

IV. Updates

<p>A. Contingency Preparedness</p>

Maintain the Radiation Injury Treatment Network (RITN) to prepare for the care of patients resulting from a hematopoietic toxic event.

All projects using FY2020 funding have been completed.

<p>B. Development of Science and Technology for Rapid Identification of Matched Donors</p>

Expand the genetic diversity of the registry through continued addition of adult donors and cord blood units, utilizing high volume HLA typing methodologies.

Supported HLA typing of 169, 486 newly registered volunteer donors between October 1, 2019 and December 31, 2020 with 24,865 added in the past quarter.

Modeling and analysis of registry coverage for the Warfighter

Activity under this aim completed between Oct. 1, 2019 and Sept. 30, 2020.

Development of science and technology for rapid communication of HLA data

Activity under this aim completed between Oct. 1, 2019 and Sept. 30, 2020.

Use of population genetics and machine learning to automate the donor selection process

Activity under this aim completed between Oct. 1, 2019 and Sept. 30, 2020.

C. Immunogenetic Studies in Transplantation

Evaluate HLA disparity and impact on HCT by adding selected pairs to the Donor/Recipient Pair project utilizing sample selection criteria that optimize the new data generated by the typing project.

Activity under this aim completed between Oct. 1, 2019 and Sept. 30, 2020.

Develop and mature typing protocols for the highly polymorphic KIR.

Activity under this aim completed between Oct. 1, 2019 and Sept. 30, 2020.

Determine the frequency and risks associated with donor clonal hematopoiesis of indeterminate potential in HCT.

Evaluating the impact of donor clonal hematopoiesis of indeterminate potential (CHIP) on HCT outcomes

Completed the analysis for the study entitled “GV19-01: Exploring the link between donor engrafted clonal hematopoiesis and adverse outcomes in allogeneic HCT: Pilot study. The study found no associations between donor CHIP and any outcomes. The lack of an association between CHIP and outcomes resulted in a reevaluation of this line of inquiry under this grant. Funds allocated for this effort have been reassigned to address the more pressing topics noted below.

Evaluation of Unrelated Donor Peripheral Blood Stem Cell (PBSC) Graft Composition and Impact on Allogeneic HCT Outcomes

While allogeneic HCT offers potentially curative therapy to patients with a variety of benign and malignant diseases, both acute and chronic GVHD continue to plague the field and often limit the longevity and quality of life for patients. The composition of PBSC grafts has been evaluated in multiple studies to attempt to discern associations between various cellular subsets and outcomes. The BMT CTN 0201 randomized trial of bone marrow versus PBSC found that PBSC grafts were associated with a higher risk of cGVHD and worse quality of life following unrelated donor HCT compared to BM. A correlative study of graft immunophenotype failed to identify any associations between PBSC graft composition and outcomes. However, the PBSC cohort included only 147 evaluable products limiting the power to evaluate various cellular subsets. The association between PBSC graft immunophenotype and outcomes remains unclear.

The primary aim of this study is to evaluate PBSC graft stem cell and associated immune cell composition and to determine at 12-months of follow-up how either the comprehensive graft cellular composition profile or specific graft composition elements influences the primary outcomes of time to neutrophil engraftment and overall survival. Secondary outcomes of interest include, but not limited to, incidence of acute and chronic GVHD, primary disease relapse, TRM, and DFS.

Analyses include:

- Stem cell subset composition (not just number) influences time to engraftment and immune reconstitution
- Both conventional and novel unconventional T cell subsets within the graft influence GVHD, relapse, infection and immune reconstitution after transplant
- Natural killer cells have a role in transplant biology and number and phenotype in the donor graft influence GVHD, relapse, infection and immune reconstitution after transplant.
- The myeloid/antigen presenting cell compartment of the graft influences infection risk and immune reconstitution, thus play a role in long term patient outcome

The secondary aims of this study are:

- Explore potential associations of favorable PBSC graft composition features that may be predicted by analysis of peripheral blood samples at time of unrelated donor work-up such that these biomarkers could be incorporated into donor selection algorithms.
- Evaluate graft composition association with >12-month outcomes for overall survival, primary disease relapse, DFS and the incidence of late transplant effects including, but not limited to, chronic GVHD, diseases of the cardiovascular, pulmonary, and endocrine systems, dysfunction of the thyroid gland, bone diseases and the development of secondary primary malignancies.
- Establish a cohort of pre-transplant recipient and pre-donation adult unrelated donor biologic samples (whole blood, plasma, viable PBMC and viable donor PBSC graft mononuclear cells) collected prospectively from donors and patients enrolled on this study, This important biospecimen resource will be critical for the support of additional protocol team defined allogeneic HCT related correlative studies that will extend the knowledge gained from the primary study.

During the past quarter a request for quotation was distributed to the identified project testing laboratory at Roswell Park Cancer Research Institute to establish the immunophenotyping panel and finalize the sample testing strategy. Study accrual is expected to begin late next quarter.

D. Clinical Research in Transplantation

Conduct clinical outcomes research using the CIBMTR research database and repository.

Activity under this aim completed between Oct. 1, 2019 and Sept. 30, 2020.

Support for the Clinical Transplant-Related Long-term Outcomes of Alternative Donor Allogeneic Transplantation (CTRL-ALT-D) trial

Activity under this aim completed between Oct. 1, 2019 and Sept. 30, 2020.

Rapid mobilization and collection of stem cells for HCT will decrease time to transplant and simplify the logistics of product harvest.

Activity under this aim completed between Oct. 1, 2019 and Sept. 30, 2020.

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