Real-World Treatment Patterns and Clinical Outcomes with First-Line Therapy in Cisplatin-Eligible and Ineligible Patients With Advanced Urothelial Carcinoma

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Background

- Locally advanced or metastatic urothelial carcinoma (la/mUC) has a poor long-term prognosis.¹
- For patients with la/mUC, cisplatin-based chemotherapy is the preferred treatment; however, up to 50% of patients are unfit for such therapy.^{2,3}
- In patients who are cisplatin-ineligible, carboplatin-based therapy may be offered as an alternative first-line (1L) therapy.^{2,3}
- Therapies targeted at programmed death 1 or programmed death-ligand 1 (PD-1/L1) have received approval in the US since 2016 and are recommended in a subset of patients with la/mUC (such as those ineligible for platinum-containing chemotherapy or with tumors with high expression of PD-1/L1 biomarker).⁴
- With these recent therapeutic advances, data describing real-world treatment patterns and clinical outcomes in patients with la/mUC receiving 1L therapy are limited.
- The objective of this study was to describe contemporary treatment patterns and real-world overall survival (OS) among patients with la/mUC receiving 1L therapy stratified by their eligibility for cisplatin therapy.

Methods

- This was a retrospective, observational study using data from the nationwide Flatiron Health longitudinal electronic health record-derived database, comprising de-identified, patient-level structured and unstructured data curated via technology-enabled abstraction.
- Eligible patients were adults diagnosed with la/mUC from May 1, 2016 to October 31, 2020, selected from the Flatiron Health database, and were followed until death or end of data availability in June 2021.
- Patients were stratified by cisplatin eligibility (during the baseline period and based on the Galsky criteria⁵) and considered at the initiation of each treatment line.
- Oncologist-defined, rule-based lines of therapy were evaluated as defined by Flatiron's methodology (oncologist-defined using pre-established validated criteria developed by Flatiron).
- Median OS among patients treated in the 1L setting was assessed from the start of 1L therapy: overall, by cisplatin eligibility, and by treatment.
- Adjusted hazard ratios (HRs) and median OS were estimated using multivariate Cox regression models adjusted for metastasis site, age at index, sex, Eastern Cooperative Oncology Group performance status (ECOG PS), smoking status, and PD-1/L1 status.

Results

- Of 4,300 patients who met the inclusion criteria, 3,311 (77.0%) received 1L therapy; 1,475 (44.5%) were cisplatin-eligible and 1,836 (55.5%) were cisplatin-ineligible.
- Compared with patients who were cisplatin-ineligible, patients who were cisplatineligible were younger (mean age, 69.0 vs 75.0 years), had a higher creatinine clearance (CrCl; median CrCl, 80.7 vs 45.3 mL/min), and were less likely to have a documented poor ECOG PS (ECOG PS \geq 2: 0% vs 29.2%; **Table 1**).

Treatment patterns

- 23% of patients did not receive any 1L therapy.
- Fewer than half of the patients who received 1L therapy subsequently received second-line (2L) therapy (n=1,471/3,311; 44.4%).
- A higher proportion of patients in the cisplatin-eligible group received 2L therapy, compared with the cisplatin-ineligible group (52.0% vs 38.3%).
- Patients who were cisplatin-eligible were more likely than those who were cisplatinineligible to receive systemic therapy: 79.5% of patients vs 75.1% in 1L and 41.3% versus 28.7% in 2L.
- Among patients who received 1L therapy, 879 of the 1,475 (59.6%) patients who were cisplatin-eligible did not receive cisplatin-combination therapy, while 229 of the 1,836 (12.5%) patients who were cisplatin-ineligible received cisplatin-combination therapy (**Figure 1**).

Table 1. Baseline characteristics of patients treated in the 1L setting			
Variable		Cisplatin-eligible (N=1,475)	Cisplatin-ineligible (N=1,836)
Sex	Female	315 (21.4)	593 (32.3)
	Male	1,159 (78.6)	1,243 (67.7)
Age at 1L therapy initiation	Mean ± SD (median)	69.0 ± 9.2 (70.0)	75.0 ± 7.7 (77.0)
	<75 years	1,002 (67.9)	706 (38.5)
	≥75 years	473 (32.1)	1,130 (61.5)
ECOG PS	0	498 (33.8)	340 (18.5)
	1	501 (34.0)	536 (29.2)
	≥2	0 (0)	536 (29.2)
	Missing/unknown	476 (32.3)	424 (23.1)
CrCla	Mean ± SD (median)	86.9 ± 25.2 (80.7)	46.3 ± 19.2 (45.3)
	<45 mL/min	0 (0)	874 (47.6)
	45–60 mL/min	0 (0)	711 (38.7)
	≥60 mL/min	1,179 (79.9)	183 (10.0)
Total number of LOTs	1	708 (48.0)	1,132 (61.7)
	2	495 (33.6)	470 (25.6)
	3	158 (10.7)	153 (8.3)
	≥4	114 (7.7)	81 (4.4)

Data expressed as n (%) unless stated otherwise. ^aData missing for 364 patients (11.0%).

1L, first-line; CrCl, creatinine clearance; ECOG PS, Eastern Cooperative Oncology Group performance status; LOT, line of therapy; SD, standard deviation.

Figure 1. Treatment patterns among (A) patients who were cisplatin-eligible and (B) patients who were cisplatin-ineligible receiving 1L therapy



Other therapies included PD-1/L1 combination therapy, mono-chemotherapy (taxanes, gemcitabine, cisplatin monotherapy, carboplatin monotherapy), and other off-label treatments. 1L/2L/3L, first-/second-/third-line; Carbo, carboplatin; Cis, cisplatin; Gem, gemcitabine; Mono, monotherapy;

MVAC, methotrexate/vinblastine/doxorubicin/cisplatin; PD-1/L1, programmed death 1 or programmed death-ligand 1.

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Overall survival with 1L therapy

- Median OS among patients receiving 1L therapy overall was 11.0 (95% confidence interval [CI]: 10.3–11.5) months.
- Median OS was longer in patients who were cisplatin-eligible than in patients who were cisplatin-ineligible (14.4 [95% CI: 13.4–16.4] vs 8.6 [95% CI: 8.1–9.2] months, respectively; HR 0.8 [95% CI: 0.7–1.1]; Figure 2).

Figure 2. Overall survival among patients receiving 1L therapy by cisplatin eligibility



HR was adjusted for primary cancer site, age, sex, ECOG PS score, smoking status, PD-1/L1 status, and CrCI. 1L, first-line; CI, confidence interval; Cis, cisplatin; CrCI, creatinine clearance; ECOG PS, Eastern Cooperative Oncology Group performance status; HR, hazard ratio; NA, not applicable; PD-1/L1, programmed death 1 or programmed death-ligand 1.

• When stratified by 1L therapy received, cisplatin + gemcitabine or MVAC was associated with longer OS compared with other therapies, in both patients who were cisplatin-eligible (median OS 20.6 months vs range 11.7–13.0 months for other therapies) and patients who were cisplatin-ineligible (median OS 13.5 vs range 6.4–9.8 months; Figure 3).

Figure 3. Overall survival among patients receiving 1L therapy who were (A) cisplatin-eligible and (B) cisplatin-ineligible, according to treatments received



HR adjusted for cisplatin eligibility, primary cancer site, age, sex, ECOG PS score, smoking status, PD-1/L1 status, and CrCI. Other therapies included PD-1/L1 combination therapy, mono-chemotherapy (taxanes, gemcitabine, cisplatin monotherapy, carboplatin monotherapy), and other off-label treatments.

1L, first-line; Carbo, carboplatin; CI, confidence interval; Cis, cisplatin; CrCI, creatinine clearance; ECOG PS, Eastern Cooperative Oncology Group performance status; Gem, gemcitabine; HR, hazard ratio; Mono, monotherapy; MVAC, methotrexate/vinblastine/doxorubicin/cisplatin PD-1/L1, programmed death 1 or programmed death-ligand 1.

Limitations

- There was the potential for misclassification of cisplatin eligibility due to missing data; however, this was tested via sensitivity analysis (in which patients with missing ECOG PS and CrCl data were excluded), and the results remained consistent with the primary analysis.
- Comparisons should be interpreted with caution; there was the potential for residual confounding due to the Cox model's inability to adjust for all confounders, despite all available characteristics being included.
- This study did not assess the use of maintenance therapy; only a small number of patients (89 in total) were receiving avelumab therapy. As maintenance therapy continues to be part of standard of care, future analyses should explore the impact of maintenance therapy.

Conclusions

- Clinical outcomes among patients with la/mUC receiving 1L therapy were poor and may have been at least partly associated with the specific treatment regimen as well as cisplatin ineligibility.
- Many patients (23%) with la/mUC did not receive 1L therapy (although the proportion receiving 1L therapy is likely increasing with the availability of PD-1/L1 therapy⁴), and among those who did, fewer than half went on to receive 2L therapy.
- Patients who were cisplatin-ineligible had shorter OS.
- Regardless of cisplatin eligibility, OS was longer in patients treated with cisplatin-based therapy compared with all other treatments.
- Among patients who received 1L therapy, 12.5% of patients who were cisplatin-ineligible received cisplatin-based therapy while 59.6% of patients who were cisplatin-eligible did not.
- o This suggests there is some subjectivity in applying the cisplatin-eligibility criteria and that physicians are considering factors beyond conventional criteria to determine cisplatin eligibility.
- This study highlights the need for more effective and tolerable 1L therapy to improve outcomes for all patients with la/mUC, especially among patients who are cisplatin-ineligible.

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