Clinical & Regulatory Challenges for Drug Development in Rare Diseases
350 Million People Globally are fighting Rare Diseases

30% of children with Rare & Genetic Diseases will not live to see their 5th birthday

1 in 10 AMERICANS LIVE WITH A RARE DISEASE

80 percent of rare diseases are caused by faulty genes
Rare Diseases

- Definition varies by country and legislation - 1:2000 in the EU; < 200,000 in the US; <50,000 in Japan; <2,000 in all of Australia...
- Affect all body systems. Perhaps most common are:
  - cancers
  - neurology
  - metabolic endocrine
  - large % pediatrics with genetic origin
History of “Rare Diseases”

- Orphan drug legislation/regulation had, as its basis, tighter regulation of drugs following Thalidomide in the 1960’s
- Rare diseases are not “new;” have always been around just needed laws and regulation, along with political will
- US Orphan Drug Act Passed - first in the World followed by Singapore, Japan, Australia, EU, and many more
**Rare Diseases by the Numbers**

A disease is defined as orphan in the U.S. when it affects fewer than **200,000 people**

There are approximately **7,000 types** of rare diseases and disorders

**95%** of rare diseases have no FDA-approved drug treatment

**80%** of rare diseases are genetic in origin

Approximately **50%** of those affected by rare diseases are children

**30%** of children with a rare disease will not live to see their fifth birthday

**8:** Average number of physicians visits before diagnosis

**3:** Average number of misdiagnoses

**7+ years:** Average time until diagnosis

**Sources:** National Organization for Rare Diseases, Global Genes Project
Studying a Rare Disease

- Small # of patients
- Live all over the country/world - rare diseases do not recognize country borders
- Drugs to treat Rare Diseases must be Safe and Effective for the disease
  - know a bit about efficacy at time of approval
  - know less about safety at time of approval
- What is known about the Natural History of the Disease
Studying a rare disease:

• Patient Awareness
  – Using Social Media not only to educate but as a means to study the natural history of a disease
• Difficult to Diagnose often misdiagnosed
  – Training future health care workers
  – Newborn screening
• Variations in the diseases - homogeneous / heterogeneous
  – Biomarkers
Clinical Trial Design

- Large double blind likely not possible
- Numbers of available/eligible patients limited
  - engage advocacy groups and social media
- May be competition for patients for some “in” diseases
- Multinational studies may be needed - but is there clinical expertise available in some areas of the world
- Small studies more susceptible to the effects of variability
Clinical Trial Design

- Careful design of the Study - power
- Carefully select the endpoint
- Seek early involvement of FDA/EMA/Regulatory Authorities
- Involve PATIENTS in planning the Clinical Trial!!
- Centers for Rare Diseases proposed
Designing the Clinical Trial

- Seek Scientific Advice/Pre-IND meeting
- Frequent interaction with Regulators - ask questions
  - avoids redundancy and saves “patients”
- If have sufficient power and effective therapy may have only one pivotal trial. Emphasis on MAY
- Attention to unmet medical need – flexibility by regulators
Designing the Clinical Trial

• In EU adaptive licensing an emerging concept
• New approaches for clinical studies being funded in 7th Framework Program
• In US NIH consortia studying certain diseases and groups of diseases
• New validated statistical design being explored
• Continual manufacturing concepts
How Safe is Safe

- Rare Safety Signals will manifest late
  - Took 20 years for first safety signals to appear
    - EPO
  - Tysabri - removed and then reintroduced to the market
  - More to be described
- Need for post marketing studies to determine safety signals as early as possible
- Always attention to Risk vs Benefit
Balance between regulation and cost and statistics

- Ethics and social mores
  - Vary in different parts of the world
- Subsidies - government/philanthropy/Venture capital
  - What will it be tied to?
- Bring the “payors” to the table
- Improving technology without increasing the cost
  - Finding difference uses for current therapies
- Coordinating Investments
Do We Need To SHARE More

• Partnerships
  – Public-private partnerships
  – Nations/states
    • Regulatory Agencies
    • Decrease Territorial imperative
  – Patient groups - Listen to the Patient. Patient involvement VERY important
  – Rare Disease Organizations - can assist with recruitment, education, cultural nuances
  – Data/Publications

• Development
  – Races between companies
Future

• Personalized Medicine
  – Gene Therapy
  – Will it alter regulation
• Data Analysis improvements
¿Questions?

Marlene E. Haffner, MD, MPH
President & CEO

11616 Danville Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20852
http://www.mhaffner.com

mhaffner3@verizon.net
301 984 5729 (office)
301 641 4268 (cell)