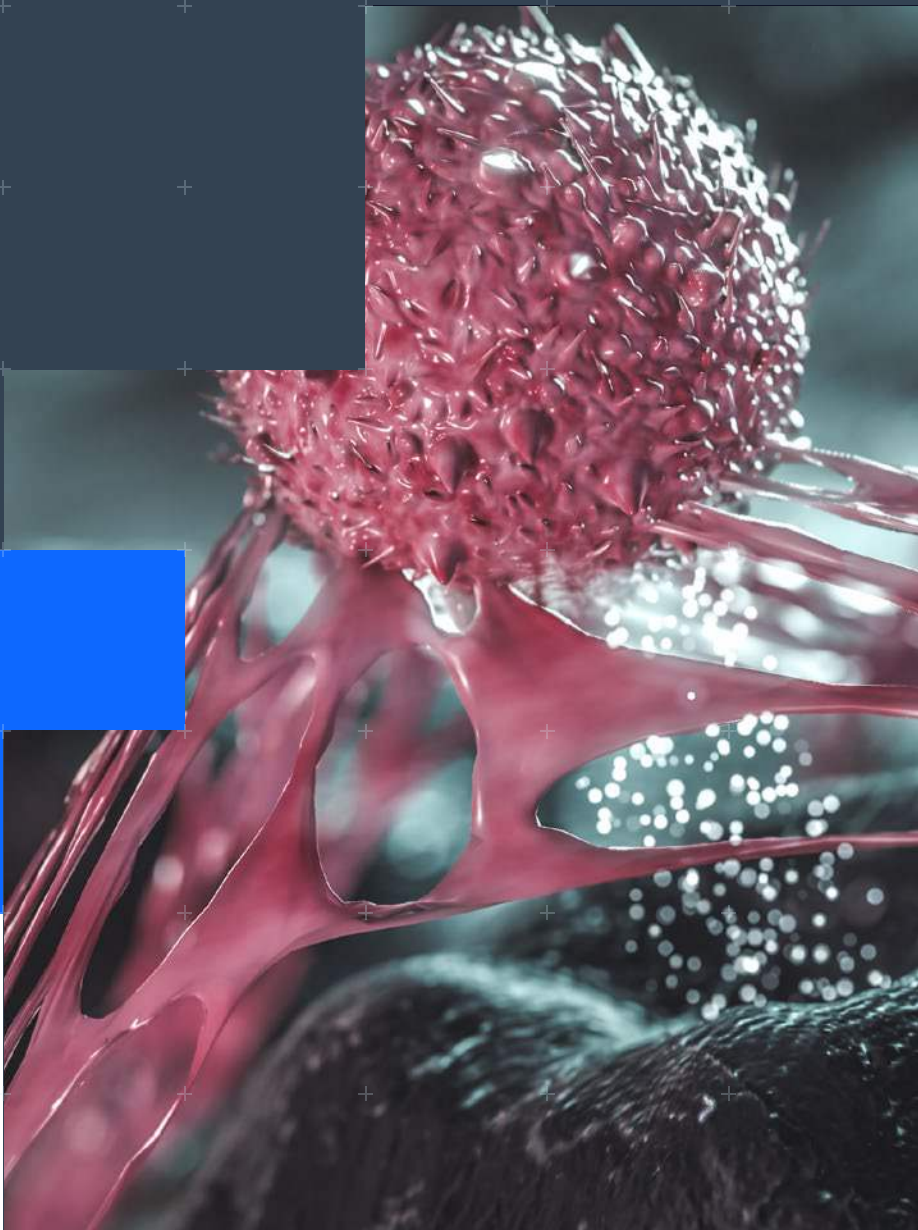


# In the Weeks Since ASCO 2023, We Asked Practicing Oncologists About the Data

by Sara Mallatt Stahl, Director of Stream Healthcare Research at AlphaSense



**AlphaSense**

The American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) held its 2023 annual meeting June 2–6 in Chicago. In the weeks since, the studies disseminated at the event have circulated within the medical community, paving the way for Stream in AlphaSense to publish reactions from 12 U.S. physicians to key ASCO 2023 presentations.

Notably, these are practicing physicians who did not participate in any of the studies presented at the conference, so this is a great boots-on-the-ground read on some of the most important oncology data presented this year. In addition, this note is an excellent supplement to the trove of ASCO-related sell-side reports and company announcements available in the [AlphaSense platform](#).

Here's what Stream experts had to say about:

## Multiple Solid Cancer Types

Two oncologists interviewed for Stream's expert transcript library were enthusiastic about **AstraZeneca** and **Daiichi Sankyo's** Enhertu presentation at ASCO 2023, saying the data support Enhertu use across multiple solid cancer types (especially gynecologic cancers) and bolstered Enhertu's position as a leading antibody drug conjugate.

## Gynecologic Oncologist Is Excited About AZN/DSKYF's Enhertu Data at ASCO 2023 and Is Eager for FDA Approval for Multiple Cancer Types

**Primary Ticker:** Daiichi Sankyo (DSKYF)

**Other Companies Mentioned:** AstraZeneca PLC (AZN), Merck & Co. Inc. (MRK), Roche Holding AG (RHHBY)

“

*In this basket trial, they [included] women with cervix, endometrial, and ovarian cancer. To see that there was an overall response rate in all of those patient populations...is just amazing.*

”

—[Gynecologic oncologist at Kaiser Permanente](#)



## Hematologist Oncologist Is Excited by Standout Data in Gynecologic Cancers at ASCO 2023 for AZN/DSKYF's Enhertu

**Primary Ticker:** AZN

**Other Companies Mentioned:** DSKYF

“

*There have been many drug antibody conjugates that we've seen over the years. I think [Enhertu] might just be the best one to come about. I think it's teaching us that all drug antibody conjugates are not created the same...This data is very exciting.*

”

—[Hematologist oncologist at ACOHA](#)

## Ovarian Cancer

Two oncologists had strongly favorable reactions to the phase-3 MIRASOL trial data on **Immunogen's** Elahere antibody drug conjugate for the treatment of platinum-resistant ovarian cancer with high folate receptor alpha expressions. One of these oncologists now expects Elahere to become the standard of care for applicable patients at their practice, and the other said it already has.

## Gynecologic Oncologist Is Very Impressed With Data Presented at ASCO 2023 on IMGN's Elahere for Platinum-Resistant Ovarian Cancer

**Primary Ticker:** Immunogen Inc. (IMGN)

**Other Companies Mentioned:** RHHBY

“

*[Elahere showed] a good 30%, 35%, 40% reduction in progression to death. For [platinum-resistant ovarian cancer], that's pretty much unheard of. In the last 20 years, we haven't had any drug that actually has done anything in platinum-resistant [patients]...I have moved Elahere to my first drug of choice [for applicable patients].*

”

—[Gynecologic oncologist at Southern California Permanente Medical Group](#)

## Gynecologic Oncologist Believes ASCO Data Establishes IMGN's Elahere as the New Standard of Care for Certain Platinum-Resistant Ovarian Cancer Patients

**Primary Ticker:** IMGN

**Other Companies Mentioned:** RHHBY, Sutro Biopharma Inc. (STRO)

“

*Most drugs in this space are going to have response rates somewhere between 10%-15%... The fact that MIRASOL showed a response rate... that was over 40% is unprecedented for any single therapy in the platinum-resistant queue. Obviously, we're very excited about this.*

”

—[Hospital-based gynecologic oncologist](#)

## Multiple Myeloma

A hematologist oncologist was impressed with **Johnson & Johnson** and **Legend Biotech's** ASCO presentation on Carvykti CAR T-cell therapy, saying study data support using Carvykti earlier in the treatment of patients with multiple myeloma. Nevertheless, this physician would like to see the data confirmed in a longer study period and has questions about how Carvykti compares to competing therapies, such as **Bristol-Myers Squibb's** Abecma.

## Hematologist Oncologist Sees JNJ/LEGN's Carvykti Data at ASCO 2023 Clearing the Way for Use in Earlier Line of Multiple Myeloma Treatment

**Primary Ticker:** Johnson & Johnson (JNJ)

**Other Companies Mentioned:** Legend Biotech Corporation (LEGN), Bristol-Myers Squibb Co. (BMY)

“

*[The Carvykti study] is very promising. I think it changes the treatment paradigm because it means we should not wait until a fourth line or later to administer CAR T [therapy]...But I think we still have issues to be resolved, like how [Carvykti] compares to stem cell transplant, what [are] the long-term safety issues and how [durable is] the survival data?...Another thing is, what is the difference between Carvykti, Abecma and...Tecvayli?*

”

—[Hematologist oncologist at New York-Presbyterian](#)

## Myelodysplastic Syndromes (MDS)

ASCO data on **Bristol-Myers Squibb's** Reblozyl left two hematologist oncologists with differing opinions about whether to use Reblozyl as a first-line treatment for certain low-risk MDS patients instead of erythropoiesis stimulating agents (ESAs), which are widely used in the first line and are available in biologic form.

### Hematologist Oncologist Is Positive on BMY's Reblozyl as a First-line Treatment for Low-Risk Myelodysplastic Syndromes Anemia in Certain Patients

**Primary Ticker:** BMY

**Other Companies Mentioned:** Amgen Inc. (AMGN), Geron Corporation (GERN)

“

*I like the data... [They provide] rationale to move [Reblozyl] to the first line... In terms of pricing, these are sensitive issues. Sometimes the biologic could be cheaper, [but]... some of them are even more expensive than [the] patent [product].*

”

—[Hematologist oncologist at MetroHealth System, Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine](#)

### Hematologist Oncologist Not Persuaded by COMMANDS Data at ASCO 2023 to Adopt BMY's Reblozyl in First-Line Low-Risk Myelodysplastic Syndromes

**Primary Ticker:** BMY

**Other Companies Mentioned:** AMGN, GERN

“

*Despite the recent [Reblozyl] evidence from ASCO for low-risk MDS... [ESAs] remain my frontline therapy of choice... You've got to remember, ESAs, they're all biosimilars... Why would I choose a not-as-well-tolerated therapy that has some need for dose adjustments when I have a readily available biosimilar product?*

”

—[Hematologist oncologist at First Health of the Carolinas Cancer Center](#)

## Head and Neck Squamous Cell Carcinoma (HNSCC)

**Bicara Therapeutics** and **PDS Biotechnology** presented studies at ASCO in which their respective HNSCC therapies were paired with **Merck's** Keytruda immunotherapy to evaluate how metastatic patients treated with these combinations compared to patients treated with Keytruda alone.

One medical oncologist was enthusiastic about results from both studies, saying the data support using the Bicara-Keytruda combination in metastatic HNSCC patients who are negative for the human papillomavirus (HPV) and using the PDS-Keytruda combination in a subset of HPV-positive patients.

### Oncologist Is Very Excited About Bicara's BCA101 and PDSB's PDS0101 Datasets at ASCO for Treating Head and Neck Squamous Cell Carcinoma

**Primary Ticker:** PDS Biotechnology Corporation (PDSB)

**Other Companies Mentioned:** Bicara Therapeutics (private), BMY, Eli Lilly (LLY)

“

*I'm very excited... Once both drugs are made available, we may start using the Bicara for non-HPV patients and the PDS for HPV-positive patients. Of course, we need to wait for the data to mature and all that, but just at a high level, that's what it looks like.*

”

—[Medical oncologist at the University of Kansas Medical Center](#)

## Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer (NSCLC)

Two medical oncologists expressed reservations about **NovoCure's** ASCO presentation on the use of its Tumor Treating Fields (TTFields) technology for platinum-resistant, metastatic NSCLC. This is in contrast to NovoCure's press release (found here in the AlphaSense platform), which described the study results as “highly encouraging.”

TTFields create electric fields that target cancer cells via skin patches, and the oncologists questioned whether the benefits of the TTFields device justified the requirement that it be worn at least 18 hours per day. Meanwhile, both oncologists said awareness of TTFields technology is relatively low even though it has been approved for glioblastoma brain tumors since 2011.



## Oncologist Thinks NVCR's Tumor Treating Fields Therapy Will Be Reserved for a Small Population Based on the Data From ASCO 2023

**Primary Ticker:** NovoCure Limited (NVCR)

**Other Companies Mentioned:** Guardant Health (GH), MRK, RHHBY

“

*I'm treating maybe...20 [glioblastoma] patients, but not more than five chose to use [NovoCure]; the main reason is the inconvenience. They have to wear it for...more than 18 hours a day. [With the NovoCure NSCLC data], we do see some survival benefit, but [as with glioblastoma], it's just three months or so. A lot of patients with Stage IV lung cancer...know it's not curable, so they want quality of life.*

”

—[Medical oncologist at the Arizona Center for Cancer Care](#)

## Oncologist Is Not Excited About the Data on NVCR's Tumor Treating Fields (TTFields) Therapy From ASCO 2023

**Primary Ticker:** NVCR

**Other Companies Mentioned:** Becton Dickinson & Co. (BDX), MRK

“

*The survival [benefit with NovoCure] is about three to four months...Do I think it's worth it? I think that's a patient's decision.*

”

—[Medical oncologist in private practice](#)

Meanwhile, another oncologist was unconvinced by ASCO data presented by **Gilead Sciences** and **Arcus Biosciences** on the use of anti-TIGIT therapy domvanalimab in combination with anti-PD1 therapy zimberelimab in first-line patients with metastatic NSCLC. Specifically, the oncologist said the data were unlikely to compel physicians to choose the domvanalimab/zimberelimab combination over established anti-PD1 monotherapies such as **Merck's** Keytruda.



## Oncologist Is Skeptical About Potential of GILD's Domvanalimab and RCUS's Zimeberelimab Combination in Non-small Cell Lung Cancer

**Primary Ticker:** Gilead Sciences Inc. (GILD)

**Other Companies Mentioned:** Arcus Biosciences Inc. (RCUS), AZN, BMY, MRK, Regeneron Pharmaceuticals Inc. (REGN), RHHBY

“

*It will be very difficult to use the [domvanalimab/zimberelimab] doublet if you are getting the same responses with... Keytruda, which in the near future may also become even more convenient with a subcutaneous formulation.*

”

—[Oncologist at UH Seidman Cancer Center at Parma Hospital](#)

## Urothelial Carcinoma (Bladder Cancer)

A urologist expressed strong enthusiasm for **Johnson & Johnson's** ASCO presentation on Balversa, saying the data showed Balversa kept certain patients with metastatic urothelial carcinoma alive longer than chemotherapy.

The study was aimed at patients who have fibroblast growth factor receptor (FGFR) gene mutations and who had not responded to immunotherapy, which is a population with an unmet need according to the urologist.

## Urologist Is Excited to Have JNJ's Balversa as an Individualized and Post-IO Treatment Option for Urothelial Carcinoma

**Primary Ticker:** JNJ

**Other Companies Mentioned:** Astellas Pharma Inc. (4503.JP), MRK, Pfizer Inc. (PFE)

“

*What's captivating about Balversa is that there's going to be a subtype of tumors that are just not going to respond to the immunotherapies because of alterations in their genes. If [Balversa] can basically unmask and help that select cohort, right there, you've got an answer for a subset that really didn't have one...It's certainly a nice, brand-new opportunity for...a group of patients that are in dire straits.*

”

—[Urologist in private practice](#)





## Early Cancer Detection

One oncologist was lukewarm on data presented by **Illumina's** Grail on its Galleri multi-cancer detection test. The oncologist cited concerns about Galleri's sensitivity level in early-stage cancer as well as the trial's use of symptomatic, rather than asymptomatic, patients.

### Oncologist Is Not Overly Impressed With Recent Data at ASCO on Grail's Galleri Cancer Test

**Primary Ticker:** Illumina Inc. (ILMN)

**Other Companies Mentioned:** GH, Hologic Inc. (HOLX), Natera Inc. (NTRA)

“

*[Galleri] might be good for catching advanced cancer, but that doesn't really help. You'd catch the advanced cancer sooner or later anyway...You want to catch them in Stage I [or] II and without symptoms. This [study] is taking patients who were having symptoms [already].*

”

—[Oncologist in a group practice](#)

# AlphaSense

## About AlphaSense

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