

CDK INHIBITORS

Hit cancer cells right in the growth centre

One characteristic of cancers in general is overactive cell growth. In normal cells, enzymes called cyclin dependent kinases regulate normal cell growth. In many cancers, including breast cancer, these CDKs are overactive and promote abnormal cell growth. This is especially apparent in estrogen receptor (ER) positive breast cancers.

A new class of drug called a cyclin dependent kinase inhibitor (CDKI) deprives the cancer cell of this important part of its growth cycle. The three current drugs in this class are called ribociclib, palbociclib and abemaciclib.

BCRC-WA offered our patients access to nine different trials with these agents, two each

involving abemaciclib and palbociclib and five involving ribociclib. Participating in so many trials with these agents meant that a wide range of our patients, both younger and older, had the opportunity to access one of these drugs.

Two trials were for early breast cancer and seven for advanced. Premenopausal women were included in six of the nine studies.

Three of these studies led to the international registration (approval) of ribociclib, which is now considered the gold standard for women with ER positive, HER2 negative advanced breast cancer.

