

# ANCO FAX News

Association of Northern California Oncologists  
Post Office Box 151109, San Rafael, California 94915-1109  
Voice: (415) 472-3960 • FAX: (415) 472-3961  
execdir@anco-online.org • www.anco-online.org

Vol. 10, No. 23

December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011

## INTRODUCTION

The *ANCO FAX News* focuses on ANCO's core activities—advocacy, clinical and professional education, and *Association* news. While membership mailings and e-mail or FAX broadcasts continue, the *ANCO FAX News* summarizes this information in a regular forum of important news to members. Contact the ANCO office for additional information regarding any item published in the *ANCO FAX News* or to contribute items.

This is the final *ANCO FAX News* for 2011.

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS  
&  
NEW YEAR TO ALL!**

## ADVOCACY

[*Editor's Note:* ANCO meets regularly with national, regional, and statewide organizations to discuss issues of importance to hematology/oncology practices and people living with cancer. We continually seek input from

members on agenda items for these meetings. Send your issues to the ANCO office.]

**ACCC, ASCO, ASH,  
and National  
Legislative &  
Regulatory Issues**

[*Editor's Note:* ANCO is a member of the *Association of Community Cancer Centers* (ACCC) and a state/regional affiliate of the *American Society of Clinical Oncology* (ASCO).

ANCO and the *American Society of Hematology* (ASH) share information with members. We regularly participate with these organizations on matters of national importance to cancer care.]

Many opponents of both the flawed sustainable growth rate methodology (SGR) and run away Medicare costs felt that the Super Committee was the best hope for a long-term solution to precipitous physician fee schedule reductions. As a result of the Super Committee's failure, **Congress must now intervene by the end of December to avert a scheduled 27.4% SGR-**

**The ANCO FAX News has information  
for every member of your practice  
or organization. Pass it along!**

- Physician Members
- Nurses & Office Managers
- Office Staff
- Colleagues & Representatives

The *Association of Northern California Oncologists* (ANCO) is an association of hematologists/oncologists dedicated to promoting high professional standards of cancer care by providing a forum for the exchange of ideas, data, and knowledge. The material contained in the *ANCO FAX News* is intended as general information for ANCO members. Because diagnostic, treatment, contracting, coding, and billing decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis, any such information contained in the *ANCO FAX News* may not apply in any given situation. Members are encouraged to contact their own consultants or advisors to obtain specific advice on matters relating to contracting, coding, and billing. The information contained in the *ANCO FAX News* should not be used as a substitute for such advice.

### driven cut to physician reimbursement in 2012.

The *House* has passed legislation to stop the Medicare SGR fee-for-service payment cuts for two years and provide a 1% update in both 2012 and 2013. The legislation also includes several other items unrelated to Medicare that are opposed by *Senate* leadership and would be vetoed by the *President*. *Congressional* leaders have publicly said they are dedicated to stopping the Medicare payment cuts before the end of the session on December 16<sup>th</sup>. CMS could briefly delay the impending Medicare physician payment cut if *Congress* appears to be on pace to reach an agreement before January 1<sup>st</sup>. The *California Medical Association* (CMA) asks all physicians to use the *American Medical Association* (AMA) hotline at (800) 833-6354 to ask your *Representatives* and *Senators* to stop the payment cuts.

**The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) final rule for the 2012 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule includes a 27.4% payment cut.** Absent sustainable growth rate methodology-driven reductions, hematology/oncology will have a 0% decrease in 2012; radiation will have a 6% reduction. The 2012 conversion factor will be \$24.6712. The rule also implements the third year of a four-year transition to new practice expense relative value units based on data from the *Physician Practice Information Survey*. This transition results in a 2.5% reduction in drug administration codes for 2012. CMS is also making changes in how it adjusts payment for geographic variation in the cost of practice. Read ACCC's analysis at [www.accc-cancer.org/advocacy/pdf/2012-PFS-final-summary.pdf](http://www.accc-cancer.org/advocacy/pdf/2012-PFS-final-summary.pdf). **The northern California 2012 Medicare Part B Fee Schedule is now available** at [www.palmettogba.com/palmetto/providers.nsf/l/J1B-8NFNJ58008?opendocument&utm\\_source=J1BL&utm\\_campaign=J1BLs&utm\\_medium=email](http://www.palmettogba.com/palmetto/providers.nsf/l/J1B-8NFNJ58008?opendocument&utm_source=J1BL&utm_campaign=J1BLs&utm_medium=email) and is effective for services performed on or after January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012.

**CMS has released new HCPCS codes for 2012.** Among the list of new drug codes for 2012 (to be used for dates of service on or after January 1<sup>st</sup>) are:

- J1557, immune globulin (Gammalex)
- J8561, everolimus (oral, .25mg)
- J9043, cabazitaxel (1mg)
- J9179, eribulin mesylate (.1mg)
- J9228, ipilimumab (1mg)

Visit [www.cms.gov/hcpcsreleasecodesets/anhcpcs/list.asp](http://www.cms.gov/hcpcsreleasecodesets/anhcpcs/list.asp) for a complete list of 2012 HCPCS codes.

**President Obama has issued an executive order intended to address a rising number of shortages for medications that treat life-threatening illnesses.** The order instructs the *United States Food and Drug Administration* (FDA) to:

- Require broader reporting of potential shortages for certain drugs;
- Speed reviews of applications to begin or change production of the drugs; and,
- Provide the *Department of Justice* with more information about possible price gouging and collusion.

In addition, the administration will send letters to pharmaceutical manufacturers to remind them about their legal obligation to report potential supply disruptions and to notify FDA of events that could lead to shortages. In the meantime, **ANCO urges members to support HR2245 and S296, legislation introduced in Congress to address drug shortages** by implementing some of the recommendations from the ASCO, *American Society of Anesthesiologists* (ASA), *American Society of Health-System Pharmacists* (ASHP), and *Institute for Safe Medication Practices* (ISMP) *Drug Shortages Summit*. If your practice is experiencing a shortage of a particular therapy, the ASHP has prepared guidance for purchasing drugs in short supply at [www.ashp.org/DocLibrary/Policy/DrugShortages/Purchasing-Drug-Products-in-Short-Supply.aspx](http://www.ashp.org/DocLibrary/Policy/DrugShortages/Purchasing-Drug-Products-in-Short-Supply.aspx) and guidelines on managing drug product shortages at [www.ashp.org/s\\_ashp/docs/files/BP07/Procure\\_Gdl\\_Shortages.pdf](http://www.ashp.org/s_ashp/docs/files/BP07/Procure_Gdl_Shortages.pdf). A patient update from the FDA is available at [www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm258152.htm](http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm258152.htm). An ASH update on the drug shortage situation is provided at [www.hematology.org/News/2011/6943.aspx](http://www.hematology.org/News/2011/6943.aspx). Read ASH's recommendations to the FDA at [www.anco-online.org](http://www.anco-online.org). The *NCI Cancer Bulletin* (Vol. 8, No. 19) includes a Special Report entitled *Workshop Examines Causes, Potential Remedies for Drug Shortages* at [www.cancer.gov/](http://www.cancer.gov/)

ncicancerbulletin/100411/page6. *Premier* has published a report (at [www.premierinc.com/about/news/11-aug/Gray-Market/Gray-Market-Analysis-08152011.pdf](http://www.premierinc.com/about/news/11-aug/Gray-Market/Gray-Market-Analysis-08152011.pdf)) on the gray market and their recommendations for avoiding complications from potentially purchasing drugs that may not have been handled/stored correctly or, worse, are counterfeit. **Unfortunately, price gouging is a by-product of drug shortages. Price gouging falls under the authority of the *Federal Trade Commission* (FTC) and it has investigated and filed suit against pharmaceutical firms for price gouging in the past.** New complaints can be filed at [www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov/](http://www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov/). The ASHP is also encouraging its members to report price gouging to the *State Attorney General's* office ([oag.ca.gov/](http://oag.ca.gov/)). The *House Oversight and Government Reform Committee* has launched an investigation into the prescription drug gray market ([www.hematology.org/News/2011/7118.aspx](http://www.hematology.org/News/2011/7118.aspx)). ANCO encourages all members to contact their *Congressional Representatives* and *Senators* using ASCO's template letters (at [capwiz.com/asco/issues/alert/?alertid=50821901](http://capwiz.com/asco/issues/alert/?alertid=50821901) for the *House* and [capwiz.com/asco/issues/alert/?alertid=27086626](http://capwiz.com/asco/issues/alert/?alertid=27086626) for the *Senate*).

**CMS has released the final rule governing *Accountable Care Organizations* (ACOs;** [www.cms.gov/aco/](http://www.cms.gov/aco/)). ACOs aim to lower costs and improve care by fostering cooperation between physicians, hospitals, and other providers. Most responses to the preliminary rule were negative. Some organizations argued that the management of ACOs should be simplified. Other groups worried that potential savings are limited, especially when considering startup costs. The final rule incorporates more than 1,300 stakeholder comments and makes a number of improvements that will strengthen the program according to CMS. View ACCC's presentation on the final rule at [www.accc-cancer.org/members\\_only/pdf/ACO-2011-Final-Rule-Slides.pdf](http://www.accc-cancer.org/members_only/pdf/ACO-2011-Final-Rule-Slides.pdf); read ASH's summary of the final rule at [www.hematology.org/News/2011/7133.aspx](http://www.hematology.org/News/2011/7133.aspx).

**CMS has posted the 2012 ICD-10 code updates** at [www.cms.gov/ICD10](http://www.cms.gov/ICD10). All HIPAA covered entities must transition to the ICD-10 code sets by October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013. CMS has developed four *Implementation Handbooks* to assist you with your transition to ICD-10. These handbooks are step-

by-step guides specifically for small and medium provider practices, large provider practices, small hospitals, and payers. For more information, visit [www.palmettogba.com/palmetto/providers.nsf/ls/J1B-8NLJ9K7336?opendocument&utm\\_source=J1BL&utm\\_campaign=J1BLs&utm\\_medium=email](http://www.palmettogba.com/palmetto/providers.nsf/ls/J1B-8NLJ9K7336?opendocument&utm_source=J1BL&utm_campaign=J1BLs&utm_medium=email).

**CMS's *Physician Quality Reporting System* (PQRS)** provides a financial incentive for eligible professionals to participate in a voluntary quality-reporting program. CMS has posted updated PQRS information at [www.cms.hhs.gov/PQRS](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/PQRS). ASH provides user-friendly information on PQRS at [www.hematology.org/Practice/PQRI/2941.aspx](http://www.hematology.org/Practice/PQRI/2941.aspx).

**CMS's *Electronic Prescribing (eRx) Incentive Program* webpage** at [www.cms.hhs.gov/ERxIncentive](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/ERxIncentive) includes updated eRx educational products. An *MLN Matters Special Edition* article (SE1107) entitled *2011 Electronic Prescribing (eRx) Incentive Program Update: Future Payment Adjustments* is now available at [www.cms.gov/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/SE1107.pdf](http://www.cms.gov/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/SE1107.pdf). For additional oncology-specific information, visit ASCO's e-prescribing website at [www.asco.org/ASCOv2/Practice+%26+Guidelines/Practice+Management+%26+Reimbursement/Electronic+Health+Records+%28EHR%29/Understanding+the+Government+Incentive+Programs/Incentive+Program+for+E-Prescribing](http://www.asco.org/ASCOv2/Practice+%26+Guidelines/Practice+Management+%26+Reimbursement/Electronic+Health+Records+%28EHR%29/Understanding+the+Government+Incentive+Programs/Incentive+Program+for+E-Prescribing).

CMS will host a *National Provider Call on PQRS and the eRx Incentive Program* on December 20<sup>th</sup>. Subject matter experts will provide an overview on EHR and registry based reporting options that are available for eligible professionals participating or looking to participate in the PQRS and/or *eRx Incentive Program*. A question and answer session will follow the presentation. Visit [www.palmettogba.com/palmetto/providers.nsf/ls/J1B-8P3QPA1818?opendocument&utm\\_source=J1BL&utm\\_campaign=J1BLs&utm\\_medium=email](http://www.palmettogba.com/palmetto/providers.nsf/ls/J1B-8P3QPA1818?opendocument&utm_source=J1BL&utm_campaign=J1BLs&utm_medium=email) for more information.

**The *United States Department of Health and Human Services* (DHHS) has announced its intention to delay the start of Stage 2 meaningful use for the *Medicare and Medicaid***

**Electronic Health Record (EHR) Incentive Programs** for a period of one year for those first attesting to meaningful use in 2011. CMS intends to propose such a delay in the Stage 2 meaningful use *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* (NPRM), which is scheduled to be published in February 2012. Attestation of Stage 2 criteria will not need to be provided until 2013. For more information, please visit [www.palmettogba.com/palmetto/providers.nsf/lsl/J1B-8PDJQH5345?opendocument&utm\\_source=J1BL&utm\\_campaign=J1BLs&utm\\_medium=email](http://www.palmettogba.com/palmetto/providers.nsf/lsl/J1B-8PDJQH5345?opendocument&utm_source=J1BL&utm_campaign=J1BLs&utm_medium=email).

**California's Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) began accepting enrollments for the DHCS/MediCal EHR Incentive Program** on December 15<sup>th</sup>. Accessing these incentives will require a two-part enrollment. Physicians must first register with CMS at [ehrincentives.cms.gov](http://ehrincentives.cms.gov). For more information and to enroll in DHCS/MediCal Program, visit [med-cal.ehr.ca.gov](http://med-cal.ehr.ca.gov).

**The Certification Commission for Health Information Technology (CCHIT) has released the first-ever certification program for oncology EHRs.** The program lays out specific technical requirements that vendors must demonstrate before receiving certification. ASCO is supportive of CCHIT's efforts in this area and believes these standards will strengthen EHRs to better manage chemotherapy, facilitate communication, and enhance cancer care. ASCO members looking to select or implement an EHR are encouraged to take a look at the CCHIT's oncology criteria at [www.cchit.org/sites/all/files/CCHIT%20Certified%202011%20Oncology%20Criteria%20FINAL%2020110517.pdf](http://www.cchit.org/sites/all/files/CCHIT%20Certified%202011%20Oncology%20Criteria%20FINAL%2020110517.pdf).

**The California Health Information Partnership & Services Organization (CalHIPSO; [www.calhipso.org](http://www.calhipso.org)) provides education and training, EHR selection and implementation, and other technical services.** Since its inception, CalHIPSO's focus has been on outreach to primary care providers (PCP). Specialists are expressing interest in being a part of CalHIPSO to obtain the valuable services provided to PCPs. Initial analysis revealed that several of CalHIPSO's service partners have expertise with implementations in multiple specialty areas, and its current group purchasing agreements with

EHR vendors include modules specific to many specialties. Therefore, CalHIPSO plans to launch a specialists program, initially as a "limited" release to current members who have indicated interest. After the first of the year, the program benefits will be extended and rolled out to other specialists. Visit [www.calhipso.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=241](http://www.calhipso.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=241) for more information.

### **CMA, MOASC, and State Legislative & Regulatory Issues**

*[Editor's Note: ANCO and the Medical Oncology Association of Southern California (MOASC) are members of the California Medical Association's (CMA) Council on Legislation, House of Delegates, and specialty delegation. ANCO and MOASC coordinate advocacy activities in California. ANCO's advocacy reporting is supported by a grant from Pfizer Oncology.]*

**The California Oncology Political Action Committee** (or CalCancerPAC), formed by ANCO and MOASC, supports candidates sensitive to the needs of hematologists/oncologists and people living with cancer in California. ANCO membership dues include a contribution to CalCancerPAC.

**CMS has approved DHCS/MediCal's request to implement a 10% cut in provider reimbursements retroactive to June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011.** These cuts only apply to fee-for-service Medicaid patients and do not apply to drug reimbursements. The cuts will be retroactive to June and implemented in mid-December to early January. The *California Hospital Association* (CHA), CMA, and several other organizations, have filed lawsuits in *Federal* court seeking to halt implementation of these reimbursement cuts. DHCS is currently evaluating provider claims and payments to determine which providers must repay the *State* and by how much and will alert all impacted providers by January 2012.

**Got payment delays? Feeling victimized by payers and overwhelmed by the process? Don't let the health plans mistreat you.** The CMA's *Center for Economic Services* (CES) has a team of reimbursement specialists available to assist ANCO's CMA members experiencing payment problems with third-party payers. CMA's CES advocates have received numerous requests for

assistance from hematologists/oncologists from ANCO and been successful in facilitating the payment of hundreds of thousands of dollars from insurance plans. For membership, please call (916) 551-2042; for reimbursement assistance, please call CMA's *Reimbursement Helpline* at (888) 401-5911.

**CMA Practice Resources (CPR)** is a monthly e-mail bulletin from CMA's *Center for Economic Services* that is full of tips and tools to help physicians and their office staff improve practice efficiency and viability. Subscribing to CPR is free and open to anyone, but CMA membership is necessary to access the resources, toolkits, forms, and tools that are located on the members-only CMA website. Please visit [www.cmanet.org/cpr](http://www.cmanet.org/cpr) to subscribe. The December 2011/January 2012 issue includes:

- 5010 Update: Enforcement Delay Presents Challenges
- Timely Filing Denials—All Clearinghouses Are Not Created Equal
- Payor Updates
- Health Plan Provider Newsletters

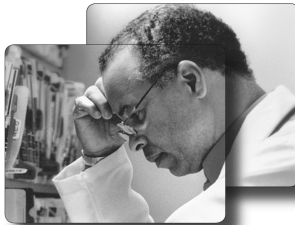
CMA has led the way in analyzing *Federal* health care reform and what it will mean to physicians. One key element of reform involves establishing *Accountable Care Organizations* (ACOs) as a new model of care. Under the new law, groups of physicians who see Medicare patients and agree to work together—meeting

certain government requirements to qualify as an ACO—would be eligible for bonuses if they meet cost benchmarks for caring for their patient population and other criteria. CMA has adopted ACO and medical foundation principles for physicians to follow. For detailed information, please visit [www.cmanet.org/news/detail?article=cma-creates-governance-guidance-for-new](http://www.cmanet.org/news/detail?article=cma-creates-governance-guidance-for-new). In addition, the *California HealthCare Foundation* has published a briefing on ACOs at [www.chcf.org/events/2010/briefing-acos-provider-integration-and-impact-of-health-reform](http://www.chcf.org/events/2010/briefing-acos-provider-integration-and-impact-of-health-reform).

The *Cancer Legal Resource Center* (CLRC) has updated *The HCP Manual: A Legal Guide for Oncology Health Professionals*. The 3rd edition will be available in January. This manual is a resource for health care professionals on the various questions and issues often faced by patients coping with cancer, and provides valuable information about cancer-related legal issues. It is available for free at [www.disabilityrightslegalcenter.org/about/CLRC-EducationalMaterialsandSeminars.cfm](http://www.disabilityrightslegalcenter.org/about/CLRC-EducationalMaterialsandSeminars.cfm).

## Doctors are everyday heroes. They are also human.

Substance abuse, depression, and career burnout can impact anyone. Including doctors. The Physicians' and Dentists' Confidential Line is here to help.



**About the hotline:** We are a confidential hotline for impaired physicians and dentists. Our sole mission is to help impaired doctors and dentists help themselves before their lives and livelihood are put into jeopardy.

**How it works:** Callers are quickly put in touch with hotline staff, all of whom are physicians or dentists with expertise in the field of addiction. We are supportive and nonjudgmental, and all calls are treated with the utmost confidentiality.

**Who should call:** If you are a physician or dentist looking for help with substance abuse or a psychological or emotional problem, we are here to help you. Also, if you are a colleague or family member of an impaired physician, please call.

Asking for help is one of the most difficult and heroic things you can do.  
Be a hero. Call us today.

## Physicians' and Dentists' Confidential Line

In Northern California: (650) 756-7787 • In Southern California: (213) 383-2691

The Physicians' and Dentists' Confidential Line is a project of the California Medical Association, with additional support from the California Dental Association. Membership in these organizations is encouraged, but is not required to use the hotline.

## **Palmetto/J1MAC, DHCS/MediCal, & Private Payers**

[Editor's Note: ANCO communicates regularly with Palmetto/J1MAC that administers the J1MAC (Medicare) in California, and the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) that administers DHCS/MediCal in California.]

**The 2011 version of the *Advanced Beneficiary Notice of Noncoverage* (ABN; Form CMS-R-131) must be used beginning January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012.** Either the 2008 or 2011 version of the ABN may be used through the end of 2011. ABNs issued after January 1<sup>st</sup>, which are prepared using the 2008 version, will be considered invalid. For more information, visit [www.palmettogba.com/palmetto/providers.nsf/ls/J1B-8MSJV37116?opendocument&utm\\_source=J1BL&utm\\_campaign=J1BLs&utm\\_medium=email](http://www.palmettogba.com/palmetto/providers.nsf/ls/J1B-8MSJV37116?opendocument&utm_source=J1BL&utm_campaign=J1BLs&utm_medium=email).

**CMS has delayed the requirement that physicians revalidate their Medicare enrollment to 2015.** Physicians who have already received revalidation notifications from Palmetto/J1MAC should fill out the form and return it per the instructions. Do not do anything until you receive a letter instructing you to revalidate. Physicians who are making changes (e.g., moving, closing practice) should continue to submit their changes as usual.

**CMS has announced that it will not initiate enforcement action until March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012 with respect to any HIPAA covered entity that is not in compliance with the Version 5010 standards.** Visit [www.palmettogba.com/palmetto/providers.nsf/ls/J1B-8NQG887668?opendocument&utm\\_source=J1BL&utm\\_campaign=J1BLs&utm\\_medium=email](http://www.palmettogba.com/palmetto/providers.nsf/ls/J1B-8NQG887668?opendocument&utm_source=J1BL&utm_campaign=J1BLs&utm_medium=email) for more information.

**For the past two years Palmetto/J1MAC has received payment error rates from the *Comprehensive Error Rate Testing* (CERT) contractor that have been almost twice the national rate.** Many of these errors are attributed to insufficient and illegible documentation, and lack of or illegible signatures. Palmetto/J1MAC is now taking steps to correct these errors by reviewing claims to identify potential areas for provider education. Palmetto/J1MAC will notify physicians by mail that a small sample of their claims will be selected for medical review. The notice will also provide recommended resources

on documentation and coding. Physicians who are notified will receive a request for medical records in the form of an *Additional Document Request* (ADR) for each claim selected, along with an example of the information that should be returned. Failure to respond to these requests will result in non-payment of the claim. Palmetto/J1MAC may also call or make unannounced site visits to physician offices to schedule an appointment for an educational meeting. Failure to participate in this education will result in 100% pre- and post-payment audit of claims. CMA is discussing the nature of these audits with Palmetto/J1MAC and the disruption and burden they will be to physician offices.

**Palmetto/J1MAC's December Medicare Advisory is available** at [www.palmettogba.com/Palmetto/Providers.Nsf/files/December\\_2011\\_Advisory\\_J1B.pdf/\\$File/December\\_2011\\_Advisory\\_J1B.pdf](http://www.palmettogba.com/Palmetto/Providers.Nsf/files/December_2011_Advisory_J1B.pdf/$File/December_2011_Advisory_J1B.pdf).

**DHCS/MediCal has announced that it is unlikely to meet the January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012 deadline to accept the latest version of standard electronic health care transactions (i.e., 5010),** including those for medical and prescription drug claims. Providers should plan for continued use of current 4010 standard transactions for up to one year beyond January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012.

## **EDUCATION**

[Editor's Note: ANCO organizes clinical and professional education meetings throughout the year and throughout Northern California.]

### ***ANCO's Oncology Reimbursement 2012***

ANCO will host its annual *Oncology Reimbursement* programs in Sacramento, San José, and Fresno on January 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>. Roberta Buell, M.B.A., *onPoint Oncology*, will provide a complete update of changes for Medicare reimbursement. Demonstrations of reimbursement/patient assistance program resources will also be provided. The meeting announcement/registration form was mailed in mid-November and is available at [www.anco-online.org/OncReimb2012.html](http://www.anco-online.org/OncReimb2012.html).

### **ANCO's SABCS Highlights 2011**

ANCO's annual *SABCS Highlights* will take place on January 11<sup>th</sup> at the *Four Seasons Hotel* in San Francisco. Faculty from *Stanford University*, *UC Davis*, and *UC San Francisco* will present and review the clinically most relevant results presented at December 2011's *San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium*. The meeting announcement/registration form was mailed in late November and is available at [www.anco-online.org/sabcs2012.html](http://www.anco-online.org/sabcs2012.html).

### **ASCO's Gastrointestinal Cancers Symposium**

ASCO's 2012 *Gastrointestinal Cancers Symposium: Science and Multidisciplinary Management of GI Malignancies* takes place at *The Moscone West Building* in San Francisco on January 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>, 2012. Visit [www.gicasymposium.org](http://www.gicasymposium.org) for more information.

### **ASCO's Genitourinary Cancers Symposium**

ASCO's 2012 *Genitourinary Cancers Symposium: An Evidence-based Multidisciplinary Approach* takes place at the *San Francisco Marriott Marquis* on February 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Visit [gucasymposium.org](http://gucasymposium.org) for more information.

### **ASH's Highlights of ASH**

ANCO is pleased to partner with the *American Society of Hematology* (ASH) to bring the only official *Highlights of ASH* to San Francisco on February 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>. This exceptional educational opportunity will feature leading hematology experts who will present unbiased analysis from the 53<sup>rd</sup> *ASH Annual Meeting* abstracts and sessions, evolving therapies, and the latest treatment options and their clinical applications. The program for the meeting along with additional details can be viewed at [www.hematology.org/Meetings/Highlights/](http://www.hematology.org/Meetings/Highlights/). ASH is accredited by the *Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education* to provide continuing medical education (CME) for physicians and has designated this educational activity for a maximum of 11 *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*. ANCO members receive a special

discounted registration rate to attend this meeting. Contact ANCO at [execdir@anco-online.org](mailto:execdir@anco-online.org) for the registration code or e-mail ASH directly at [customerservice@hematology.org](mailto:customerservice@hematology.org).

### **Additional Education Meetings**

Other meetings of possible interest to ANCO member practices are:

January 10<sup>th</sup>  
*Progress in the Treatment of Thyroid Cancer CancerCare*  
Connect Education Workshop

February 8<sup>th</sup>  
*The Latest Developments Reported at the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium CancerCare*  
Connect Education Workshop

February 9<sup>th</sup>  
*Update on the Treatment of Liver Cancer CancerCare*  
Connect Education Workshop

February 18<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>  
*32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference: Clinical Hematology & Oncology*  
Scripps Cancer Center  
San Diego

February 29<sup>th</sup>  
*Medical Update on Pancreatic Cancer CancerCare*  
Connect Education Workshop

Please contact the ANCO office for more information about these meetings.

## **ASSOCIATION NEWS**

### **Board of Directors**

The ANCO *Board of Directors* teleconferenced on December 13<sup>th</sup> to discuss and/or act upon the following issues:

- National and California advocacy
- Professional and clinical education
- Palmetto/JIMAC advocacy
- Contributions to other organizations
- *Executive Director* contract renewal

Contact the ANCO office for additional information on any of these items.

The ANCO *Board of Directors* meets by teleconference and occasionally in person to discuss issues affecting the *Association*, clinical and professional education, and ways to better serve the membership. *Board* meetings are open to individual physician members. The **next regularly scheduled ANCO Board of Directors meeting** will take place on January 11<sup>th</sup>. Please call José Luis González, *ANCO Executive Director*, at (415) 472-3960 if you wish to participate in a future teleconference/meeting.

### **Payer Provider Partnerships**

On December 7-8<sup>th</sup>, physicians, pharmacists, and cancer program executives gathered at *Fox Chase Cancer Center* for ACCC's first-ever seminar on the changing landscape in oncology payment and strategies for integrating cancer guidelines and pathways into daily practice. Experts and panelists from cancer programs and oncology practices who have begun to utilize cancer management systems reviewed the process by which they selected and implemented their system. Read more about ACCC's *Navigating the Changing Landscape of Payment Models in Community Oncology: Cancer Guidelines and Pathways in the Community Setting* at [www.accc-cancer.org/meetings/meetings-pathways2011.asp](http://www.accc-cancer.org/meetings/meetings-pathways2011.asp).

### **Individual Member News**

*By Your Side* was founded in 2010 in order to answer a critical need for oncology nurses. The program seeks to make a profound difference in the lives of cancer patients and their families by putting oncology certified nurses by their side. *By Your Side* is now offering full and partial grants to cover the *Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation* (ONCC) application fee, annual *Oncology Nursing Society* (ONS) membership, annual ONS chapter membership, and a 16-week online review course. Visit [www.freemason.org/byyourside/about.htm](http://www.freemason.org/byyourside/about.htm) for more information.

An updated *Directory of Members* is available online at [www.anco-online.org/pubs.html](http://www.anco-online.org/pubs.html) as a .pdf document. We urge all ANCO members to

download their own edition of *The ANCO Directory of Members*. The online edition is regularly updated. Therefore, please verify your *Directory* entry and contact the ANCO office at [execdir@anco-online.org](mailto:execdir@anco-online.org) with any corrections, additions, and/or deletions.

### **Group Member News**

ANCO initiated a **Group Membership** in 2008 based on a mutual set of perceived values and benefits and a mutual set of interests. The ANCO *Board* believes that the *Association* and *The Permanente Medical Group* (TPMG) will each receive value from Group Membership. ANCO thanks *The Permanente Medical Group* for joining ANCO.

ANCO initiated a **Multi Site Group Membership** in 2010 to encourage all physicians (medical and radiation oncologists) from multi-site and multidisciplinary practices to join. ANCO thanks *Diablo Valley Oncology & Hematology Medical Group, EastBay Partners in Cancer Care, Pacific Cancer Care, Palo Alto Medical Foundation, Redwood Regional Oncology Center, and Valley Medical Oncology Consultants* for their multi site group memberships.

### **Institutional Member News**

ANCO initiated an **Institutional Membership** in 2002. *Department(s) of Hematology and/or Oncology* of accredited, degree granting teaching universities or research institutions are eligible for institutional membership. ANCO thanks the following Institutional Members for their support:

- *Stanford University Medical Oncology*
- *University of California, Davis, Cancer Center*
- *University of California, San Francisco*

For information on **continuing medical education meetings organized by our Institutional Members**, please visit:

- [med.stanford.edu/seminars/cmecalendar.do](http://med.stanford.edu/seminars/cmecalendar.do)
- [www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/cme/conferences](http://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/cme/conferences)
- [www.cme.ucsf.edu/cme](http://www.cme.ucsf.edu/cme)

*Stanford's 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Multidisciplinary Management of Cancers: A Case-based Approach* returns on Friday and Saturday, March 9-10<sup>th</sup>, 2012. This meeting will take place at the *Li Ka-Shing Center for Learning & Knowledge* on the campus of *Stanford University*. For more information, visit [cancer.stanford.edu/calendar/events/2008/events2011asmmc.html](http://cancer.stanford.edu/calendar/events/2008/events2011asmmc.html).

For information on **Institutional Member clinical trials**, please visit:

- [cancertrials.stanford.edu/](http://cancertrials.stanford.edu/)
- <https://ccresources.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/csr/content/clinicaltrialspublicsearch.csr>
- [clinical-trials.ucsf.edu:8000/trials/index.php](http://clinical-trials.ucsf.edu:8000/trials/index.php)

### Corporate Member News

ANCO thanks the following **Corporate Members** for their generous support that enables ANCO to provide services to the hematology/oncology community in Northern California, and to provide its members and their patients with substantial benefits in the areas of advocacy, education, and information dissemination:

*Agendia • Alexion Pharmaceuticals  
Allos Therapeutics • AMGEN  
The Apothecary Shop • Astellas Oncology  
AstraZeneca • Baxter BioScience  
Bayer Healthcare/Onyx Pharmaceuticals  
Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals  
biogenIDEC • bioTheranostics  
Bristol-Myers Squibb Oncology  
Cardinal Health Specialty Solutions  
Celgene • Cephalon Oncology  
Clariant Diagnostic Services • Dendreon • Eisai  
Genentech BioOncology • Genomic Health  
Genzyme Oncology • GlaxoSmithKline Oncology  
Innovatix • Janssen Biotech  
Lash Group Healthcare Consultants  
Lilly Oncology  
McKesson Specialty Health • Merck • Millennium  
Myriad Genetics • Novartis Oncology  
Oncology Supply/ION • Pathwork Diagnostics  
Pfizer Oncology • Sanofi Oncology  
Seattle Genetics • Spectrum Pharmaceuticals*

We especially wish to thank and welcome *The Apothecary Shop, Baxter BioScience, Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Cardinal Health Specialty Solutions, Dendreon, and Seattle Genetics*

as new Corporate Members in 2011 and *Innovatix* as a new Corporate Member for 2012. *Response Genetics*, and *Vidacare* did not renew their Corporate Membership for 2011. Please visit [www.anco-online.org/assistance.html](http://www.anco-online.org/assistance.html) for **updated Corporate Member drug reimbursement and patient assistance program information**.

*AMGEN* informs ANCO that the *United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA)* has approved changes to the *Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategies (REMS)* for *Nplate* to remove the restricted distribution programs and the safety reporting requirements that were part of the REMS. *GlaxoSmithKline Oncology* informs ANCO that the FDA has approved changes to the REMS for *Promacta* to remove the restricted distribution programs and the safety reporting requirements that were part of the REMS.

*Innovatix* is a leading group purchasing organization serving non-acute care facilities nationwide. Delivering a vast array of products and services (e.g., cellular, facilities management, MRO & construction, office supplies, food, credit card processing, technology, employee discount programs, and inbound/outbound freight) across diverse markets, *Innovatix* helps members reduce costs while improving quality of care. Contact Patrick Walsh, *Associate Vice President Oncology Services*, at [pwalsh@innovatix.com](mailto:pwalsh@innovatix.com) or (760) 310-1056 for more information.

### Publications, Resources, Services, & Surveys

As part of ASCO's ongoing efforts to respond to a rapidly changing oncology practice environment, a ground-breaking new practice survey will give ASCO members the opportunity to provide timely and accurate practice insight that will aid ASCO's advocacy work on legislative, regulatory, and reimbursement issues affecting community oncology practices. The *Assessment of the Evolution and State of Practices Survey (AESOP)* is a comprehensive survey designed to gain in-depth understanding of how oncology practices are faring in the current economic, legislative, and

regulatory environment. AESOP will provide the most accurate picture to date of what oncology practices look like and the challenges they face in providing quality cancer care. Learn more at [ascoaction.asco.org/Home/tabid/41/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/71/ASCO-to-Launch-Ground-breaking-New-Practice-Survey.aspx](http://ascoaction.asco.org/Home/tabid/41/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/71/ASCO-to-Launch-Ground-breaking-New-Practice-Survey.aspx). ANCO urges all members to participate in AESOP.

**ASCO's Quality Oncology Practice Initiative (QOPI) is designed to promote excellence in cancer care by helping oncologists create a culture of self-examination and improvement.** ASCO is now offering the *QOPI Certification Program* to recognize QOPI participants who achieve rigorous standards for cancer care. The *QOPI Certification* designation can be used by certified practices to demonstrate an advanced commitment to quality. For more information or to register, go to [qopi.asco.org](http://qopi.asco.org).

**Oncology Practice**, a social networking site where practice administrators can easily connect, collaborate, and exchange information about day-to-day issues facing oncology practice, **has moved to ASCOConnection.org**. ASCOConnection merges Practice, EHR, and ASCO Connection Magazine into one site. The Practice section is located under the Forums tab.

**ASCO's Oncology Practice Insider is an interactive biweekly communication specifically devoted to oncology practice management issues and for practice managers.** Subscribe to the *Oncology Practice Insider* via e-mail to [practice@asco.org](mailto:practice@asco.org). Recent issues feature:

The November issue of the *Journal of Oncology Practice* features articles on palliative care and survivorship. Visit [www.jopasco.org](http://www.jopasco.org) for more information.

**ACCC's Reimbursement and Patient Assistance Programs: A Guide for Community Cancer Centers helps community cancer centers meet the ongoing challenge of ensuring access to care for all patients with cancer.** Available both in print and online, the *Guide* brings together information on pharmaceutical and non-pharmaceutical patient assistance programs and reimbursement resources. This digital edition allows users to link directly to program

information and enrollment forms. Visit [www.accc-cancer.org/publications/publications-PAP.asp](http://www.accc-cancer.org/publications/publications-PAP.asp) to access this resource.

**The Community Oncology Alliance's (COA) Administrators' Network (CAN) website is available at [can.communityoncology.org/#](http://can.communityoncology.org/#).** Bobbi Buell is the CAN *Web Mistress*. The site includes a variety of presentations, tools, resources, and copies of her newsletter.

The December issue of the *Journal of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network* focuses on NCCN guidelines for occult primary cancers. Visit [www.jnccn.org/content/current](http://www.jnccn.org/content/current) for more information. NCCN has updated their *Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology and/or Drugs & Biologics Compendium* for non-melanoma (basal cell and squamous cell) skin cancers, dermatofibrosarcoma protuberans, and merkel cell carcinoma; and, pancreatic adenocarcinoma. NCCN's on-line and live educational activities are listed at [www.nccn.org/professionals/meetings/default.asp](http://www.nccn.org/professionals/meetings/default.asp).

### *Individual Membership Dues for 2012*

**Membership renewal notices for 2012 were mailed to all members in late November.** Accompanying the membership renewal notices was the 2011 *Annual Report* (visit [www.anco-online.org/AR2011.pdf](http://www.anco-online.org/AR2011.pdf)) and annual election materials. Be sure to provide ANCO with your e-mail address and the name(s) and e-mail address(es) of office and/or nurse manager contact(s). Those not renewing their membership by July 1<sup>st</sup> will be deleted from the *Directory of Members*, and will no longer be eligible for any ANCO benefits. Contact the ANCO office if you did not receive or misplaced your membership dues renewal notice.

ANCO seeks new members. **All members of a practice should join ANCO.** And, ANCO seeks to enroll radiation oncologists as members, so please send us contact information for the radiation oncologists within your practice and/or to whom you refer patients.

**Remember, a larger ANCO is a stronger ANCO!**