

ANCO FAX News

Association of Northern California Oncologists
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INTRODUCTION

The *ANCO FAX News* focuses on ANCO's core activities—advocacy, clinical and professional education, membership benefits, and *Association* news. While membership mailings, FAX broadcasts, and ListServ postings 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.

The *ANCO FAX News* is sent to member practices (via FAX) and corporate member contacts (via e-mail). The next regular *ANCO FAX News* will be published on October 21st.

Comments on and contributions to the *ANCO FAX News* are always welcome and encouraged at ANCO, P.O. Box 151109, San Rafael, CA 94915-1109; Voice: (415) 472-3960; FAX: (415) 472-3961; ExecDir@anco-online.org.

ADVOCACY

[*Editor's Note:* ANCO meets regularly with national, regional, and statewide organizations to discuss issues of importance to oncology practices and people with cancer. We continually seek input from members on agenda items for these meetings. Send your issues to the ANCO office.]

ACCC, ASCO, 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). We regularly participate with these organizations on matters of

national importance to oncology practices.]

ANCO and ASCO continue to work towards ensuring that people with cancer have access to quality cancer care in the community. Here is the latest with regard to the *Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003* (MMA):

- **4Q05 Average Sales Prices (ASP)** and **2-3Q05 ASP** updates were announced by CMS. Visit www.cms.hhs.gov/providers/

**There is information in the
ANCO FAX News
for every member of your practice
or organization.
Pass it along!**

- Physician Members**
- Nurse & Office Managers**
- Office Staff**
- Colleagues & Representatives**

The *Association of Northern California Oncologists* (ANCO) is an association of medical oncologists and hematologists dedicated to promoting high professional standards of oncology 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.

drugs/asp.asp for additional information.

- **2006 drug administration CPT codes** have been posted on the *American Medical Association* website (www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/3113.html; select *What's New*). Coding experts are reviewing the new codes to determine how they will crosswalk to the 2005 G codes. Advance word is that the 2006 CPT codes appear to be keeping the same basic structure as the 2005 G codes.

- CMS has temporarily delayed the bidding process for *Competitive Acquisition Program (CAP)* vendors and anticipates that drugs will be delivered through the CAP program starting in July 2006. ASCO's comments (available at www.anco-online.org/mma.html) focus on the unacceptable patient coinsurance, prohibition on moving drugs between offices, payment for administrative costs, and specification of the date of drug administration provisions. ASCO also called for additional patient support services to be provided by the CAP vendors. Finally, ASCO commented again on vendors selling physician utilization data.

- The **2006 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule** proposes to reduce physician reimbursement by 4.3 percent for 2006. CMS also discusses the **2005 demonstration measuring quality of care for cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy** in the proposed rule. CMS's *Oncology Demonstration Project Fact Sheet* states that CMS will "engage all stakeholders on the merits of the program and the opportunities to better capture data on the clinical care of patients with cancer, and improve the provision of that care." ASCO's summary of the proposed 2006 *Medicare Physician Fee Schedule* can be found at www.asco.org/mma (under *Special Alerts* for August 4th).

- **House Resolution (HRes) 261** is being considered by the full *House of Representatives*. This legislation commends CMS for creating the demonstration

project, calls for policy makers to extend the demonstration project beyond 2005, and (at ASCO's suggestion) contains specific language stating that payments to physicians for participating in the demonstration project should continue to ensure that Medicare patients with cancer have access to chemotherapy treatment. **Please call or write your Congressional Representative to express your support for HRes261 and to ask them to sign on to this important Resolution.** You can find contact information for your *Representative* by visiting ASCO's *Grassroots Action Center* at capwiz.com/asco.

Visit www.asco.org/mma, www.anco-online.org/mma.html, or call/e-mail ASCO's billing and coding hotline at (703) 299-1054/practice@asco.org for up-to-date information on changes in coding for drug administration services, as well as billing and payments for drugs. And, **join ASCO's Grassroots Advocacy Network** at www.asco.org/grassroots_survey.

Recently, the *United States Pharmacopeia-Drug Information (USP-DI)/Thomson Micromedex* published its acceptance of new indications for **trastuzumab (Herceptin)**, **bevacizumab (Avastin)**, and **cetuximab (Erbix)**. The USP-DI monographs for these drugs have been revised to include the following off-label uses:

- **Trastuzumab (Herceptin)**—Breast cancer, adjuvant, in combination with doxorubicin, cyclophosphamide, and paclitaxel for the treatment of HER-2 positive breast cancer. (Published 09/07/05)
- **Bevacizumab (Avastin)**—Non-squamous non small cell lung cancer, advanced/metastatic, first-line treatment, in combination with paclitaxel and carboplatin. (Published 09/06/05)
- **Cetuximab (Erbix)**—Malignant tumor of head and neck, relapsed/refractory, as single agent and in combination with radiotherapy or platinum-based chemotherapy in the

treatment of head and neck cancer.
(Published 8/18/2005)

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) House of Delegates and Council on Legislation. ANCO and MOASC cooperate on several joint ventures and coordinate activities in the advocacy and membership benefit arenas. Each is represented at the Board meeting of the other.]

Noteware Government Relations represents ANCO (and MOASC) in Sacramento. They report:

- Earlier this year, ANCO/MOASC opposed AB654 legalizing physician-assisted suicide. ANCO/MOASC's leadership of the physician community successfully stalled AB654. Proponents of physician-assisted suicide are already gearing up for next year's fight in the State Senate. The advocacy group promoting the bill, *Compassion and Choices*, is re-crafting their message, has hired a political consulting team and a pollster, and has had four focus groups to help them find a winning argument. They have decided the word *suicide* has a negative tone. The proponents of physician-assisted suicide believe that more acceptable language includes *aide in dying*, *assisted dying*, and *death with dignity*. ANCO/MOASC remains opposed to physician-assisted suicide and will work to defeat the bill in January.

In addition, ANCO has written the *Governor asking him to sign SB576* that would require certain health insurance policies that provide outpatient prescription drug benefits to also provide coverage for tobacco cessation services. Contact the ANCO office for ANCO/MOASC's positions on additional legislation.

ANCO and MOASC have agreed to form the *California Oncology Political Action Committee* or CalCancerPAC.

Organizational steps have been completed and ANCO will launch fund-raising efforts for CalCancerPAC in late 2005.

CalCancerPAC's goal will be to support

candidates sensitive to and issues specific to the needs of oncologists and their patients in California.

According to a recent CMA survey, 60% of physicians will no longer accept new Medicare patients, and 40% would be forced to stop treating Medicare patients completely, if Congress fails to replace the Medicare sustainable growth rate (SGR) formula. If Congress fails to act before the end of the year, physician rates will be cut 4.3 percent on January 1st, 2006, and will be cut by a total of 31 percent during the next six years. The cuts are an unintended consequence of the SGR formula. **CMA encourages physicians to contact their Congressional Representatives and urge them to support S1081 and HR2356 that would provide physician rate increases for at least the next two years.** The House and Senate bills—both called the *Preserving Patient Access to Physicians Act of 2005*—provide a physician payment increase for 2006 of at least 2.7 percent, as recommended by the *Medicare Payment Advisory Commission* (MedPAC). The Senate bill would add an estimated 2.6 percent increase in 2007. The House bill would provide a permanent fix to the Medicare payment formula, calculating physician rates in 2007 and beyond with a new formula based on the *Medicare Economic Index* (which measures physician practice cost inflation). AMA, CMA, and the county medical societies are working together to convince Congress to permanently fix the Medicare payment formula. Physicians are encouraged to participate in this grassroots effort by calling on their Federal legislators to support a permanent fix to the Medicare formula.

Physician office laboratories (POs) established on or after January 1st, 1996, must be either licensed by or registered with the California Department of Health Services, subjecting them to fees and regulations beyond those currently imposed under the Federal *Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments* (CLIA) program. Laboratories that perform only "waived" tests (classified by FDA or CDC to be so simple that there is little risk of error) and labs that perform only "provider-performed microscopy" tests will be exempt from the State licensure requirements, but will have to register with the State.

Download DHS's memorandum entitled *Clinical*

Laboratories Oversight Program and FAQs at www.anco-online.org/advocacy.html or visit www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/lfsb/default.htm.

NHIC/Medicare & DHS/MediCal

[Editor's Note: ANCO meets with *National Heritage Insurance Company* (NHIC) that administers Medicare in California and the *Department of Health Services* (DHS) that administers MediCal in California.]

The *Medicare B Resource* (September 2005) is available online at www.medicarenhic.com/news/provider_news/mbr_sept05.pdf.

Effective October 1st, 2005, CMS will terminate the HIPAA contingency plan for incoming claims. NHIC/Medicare will return incoming claims submitted in a non-HIPAA compliant format.

NHIC/Medicare will send providers the 2006 Participation Enrollment and Fee Schedule on CD in November 2005. No internet access is required to access the information. Providers who have billed Medicare in the past year will be mailed a CD automatically. If, after receiving the CD, they find that they cannot access the data properly or cannot download the information from the NHIC/Medicare website, a paper copy of the fee schedule for their area can be mailed to their office.

Physicians can now apply for *National Provider Identifiers* (NPIs). Physicians who are covered by HIPAA will need these standard unique identifiers to submit HIPAA-compliant claims; physicians who are not covered by HIPAA do not have to obtain NPIs, but may do so if they wish. NPIs will replace health care provider identifiers in use today in standard health care transactions. An instructional website (www.cms.hhs.gov/medlearn/npiviewlet.asp) provides an overview of the NPI, a walkthrough of the application, as well as live links to where the learner can apply for an NPI. For more information, visit www.cms.hhs.gov/medlearn/matters/mmarticles/2005/SE0555.pdf.

The most recent *NHIC/Medicare Medicare Advisory Forum* (MAF) teleconference took place on September 21st. Among the items discussed most relevant to oncology were:

- Care Plan Oversight Webinar FAQs to be online soon.

The next *NHIC/Medicare Advisory Forum* (MAF) teleconference takes place on December 13th.

CMS is looking for volunteers (physicians, nurses and other health care professionals including billers and front office staff) to pilot test their newest web-based training course entitled *Expanded Benefits* which educates users on the new preventive services available under Medicare. If you are interested in pilot testing this course, then please send an e-mail that includes your name, profession, and contact information to CMS at medlearn@cms.hhs.gov (subject line, *Pilot Tester*). CMS especially needs physicians and nurses to volunteer for this testing.

Visit www.medicarenhic.com/whats_new/whats_new.shtml to learn the latest information (updated weekly) from NHIC/Medicare. Weekly updates are also posted on ANCO's WebLog (at www.anco-online.org/news/index.html; under *California News*).

EDUCATION

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

You Make The Difference! A Workshop For Healthcare Professionals

Meryl Luallin, *Sullivan/Luallin Healthcare Consultants*, a nationally recognized healthcare consultant that conducts ANCO's patient satisfaction survey every other year, delivered two lively and interactive workshops on patient (or customer) service to a cumulative audience of approximately 70 physicians, nurses, and practice staff. *Genentech BioOncology* sponsored these meetings. Visit www.anco-online.org/luallin.html to download the meeting materials.

ANCO's 2005 Annual Meeting

ANCO will hold its 2005 *Annual Meeting* from Friday evening, October 14th, through Sunday morning, October 16th at the *Tenaya Lodge at Yosemite*. Physician members and their nurse and practice managers should plan on attending this event. A distinguished national and local faculty

will present the latest national and statewide legislative/regulatory updates, discuss ethical issues in oncology care, present information on the use of physician extenders, debate legal issues in drug contracting, and dissect CMS's *Competitive Acquisition Program* (CAP). ANCO's 2005 *Annual Meeting* is being sponsored in part by *AmerOnc, AMGEN, APP/Abraxis Oncology, AstraZeneca, Bayer Oncology/Onyx Pharmaceuticals, Berlex Laboratories, biogenIDEC, Cell Therapeutics, Enzon Pharmaceuticals, Genentech BioOncology, Genitope Corporation, GlaxoSmithKline, International Oncology Network/Oncology Supply, Lilly Oncology, MedImmune Oncology, MGI Pharma, Millennium, MOSAIC Healthcare Consultants, National Oncology Alliance, Novartis Oncology, Onmark/Oncology Therapeutics Network, Ortho Biotech, OSI Pharmaceuticals, Pfizer Oncology, Pharmion, Roche Oncology, Sanofi Aventis Oncology, and US Oncology*. Visit www.anco-online.org/brochure.pdf to download the meeting announcement, registration form, and housing information (still available at the *Apple Tree Inn*, 888-9683-5111, www.appletreeinn-yosemite.com, adjacent to the *Tenaya Lodge*).

Update on the Surgical Treatment of Breast Cancer

On Tuesday evening, October 18th, Terry Mamounas, M.D., *Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine*, will help ANCO recognize *Breast Cancer Awareness Month* with a presentation on the surgical treatment of breast cancer. This program will take place at the San Francisco Marriott. *APP/Abraxis Oncology*,

Genentech BioOncology, Genomic Health, Lilly Oncology, Ortho Biotech, Pfizer Oncology, and Sanofi Aventis Oncology are supporting this meeting. A copy of the meeting announcement was mailed in early September. Visit www.anco-online.org/mamounas.html for more information and to download the registration form.

Additional Education Meetings

Other meetings of possible interest to ANCO member practices are:

October 6-8th

Chicago Supportive Oncology Conference

October 14th

Bone Health for Women Living with Breast Cancer CancerCare (and others)
Telephone Education Workshop
(www.cancercare.org)

October 18th

Clinical Trials: Improving Care of People Living with Cancer CancerCare (and others)
Telephone Education Workshop
(www.cancercare.org)

October 23rd-26th

25th Annual Nurses Symposium
Scripps Cancer Center
San Diego

October 26th

Emerging Therapies in the

Treatment of Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia (CLL)

CancerCare (and others)
Telephone Education Workshop
(www.cancercare.org)

November 6-9th

2005 Fall Conference
California Hospice Foundation
San Diego

November 9th

Improving Your Chemotherapy Experience

ANCO thanks

AmerOnc, AMGEN, APP/Abraxis Oncology, Bayer Oncology/Onyx Pharmaceuticals, Berlex Laboratories, biogenIDEC, Cell Therapeutics, Enzon Pharmaceuticals, Genentech BioOncology, Genitope Corporation, Genomic Health, GlaxoSmithKline, International Oncology Network/Oncology Supply, Lilly Oncology, MedImmune Oncology, MGI Pharma, Millennium, MOSAIC Healthcare Consultants, National Oncology Alliance, Novartis Oncology, Onmark/Oncology Therapeutics Network, Ortho Biotech, OSI Pharmaceuticals, Pfizer Oncology, Pharmion, Roche Oncology Sanofi Aventis Oncology, and US Oncology

for supporting clinical and professional education.

CancerCare (and others)
Telephone Education Workshop
(www.cancer.org)

November 16-19th
First Annual Oncology World Congress
New York

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

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

[Editor's Note: All ANCO members are eligible for benefits from the *California Oncology Consortium* (COC) and *Hematology Oncology Leadership Network* (HOLN).]

ANCO On-Line

ANCO's independent website at www.anco-online.org features:

- a general description and introduction to the *Association*, its activities, leadership, and membership benefits.
- advocacy information (including ANCO and ASCO MMA resources).
- clinical and professional education meeting announcements and distributed materials.
- survey reports and publications and WebLog.
- clinical trials information.
- links to affiliated organizations, and updated physician, nurse, manager, and patient resources.

The WebLog (ANCO News On-Line) posts and archives important news for oncology practices on an almost daily basis. Among the additional news topics covered at www.anco-online.org/news/index.html are:

- ACCC Alerts
- ANCO Meeting Announcements
- ASCO's e-News, MMA Special Alerts, and MMA Today's
- CMA Alerts
- CMS/Medicare Website Updates
- NHIC/Medicare Website Updates

ANCO urges its members to bookmark www.anco-online.org/news/index.html (or subscribe to www.anco-online.org/news/

[rss.xml](#) using your favorite news reader software; e.g., RssReader for Windows or NetNewsWire for Macintosh) and refer to it often.

California Oncology Consortium (COC)

The COC is a cooperative venture of ANCO and MOASC. The *Consortium* maintains two ListServes for the exchange of general/administrative and clinical information and has a group purchasing organization (GPO).

Group Purchasing Organization. The COC GPO has preferred vendor agreements and discounted pricing with *International Oncology Network* (ION)/*Oncology Supply* (OS), *National Oncology Alliance* (NOA)/*Cardinal*, *Onmark/Oncology Therapeutics Network* (OTN), and *Oncology Pharmaceutical Services* (OPS) for oncology pharmaceuticals and a wide-range of value-added services.

ION's 2005 meeting schedule includes:

- 11th Annual Perspectives in Breast Cancer (October 14-15th, Boston)
- 10th Annual Perspectives in Thoracic Oncology (November 4-5th, Philadelphia)

NOA cordially invites oncologists and oncology nurses to attend *Exploring a Novel Approach to Taxane Therapy* featuring Hope Rugo, M.D., on October 10th at Ruth's Chris Steak House in Walnut Creek For more information, please call (866) 866-4632 x204 or visit noainc.com/continuing-education/index.shtml

The *NOA Fall Conference: Survival Strategies in a Changing Environment* takes place on Saturday, October 22nd, 2005, at Le Meridien at Beverly Hills in Los Angeles. The *NOA Fall Conference* will be a general business meeting focusing on three key areas relevant to the stability of oncology care today and the anticipated needs for the future—namely, quality, technology, and clinical tools. Visit www.noainc.com to find out more information, view the agenda, and register.

OTN is pleased to introduce ANCO members to its preferred group purchasing organization, *Onmark*. *Onmark* shares OTN's longstanding commitment to extend and enhance the lives of

cancer patients and provide the support community oncology practices need to prosper.

ANCO recently approved the addition of *Oncology Pharmaceutical Services (OPS)* to the list of preferred vendors for products and services to the membership. An introduction to OPS was FAXed to all member practices in early September. **Join OPS for a breakfast demonstration of *iKnowMed* at the ANCO 2005 Annual Meeting on Saturday morning at 7AM.** *iKnowMed* is an oncology software package specifically designed for the medical oncology physician office setting.

Hematology Oncology Leadership Network (HOLN)

HOLN is a network of state oncology and oncology manager societies from Northern California, Southern California, Connecticut, Georgia, New Jersey, Ohio/West Virginia, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. As an ANCO member, you may enroll in HOLN and benefit from discounted pricing from several major pharmaceutical manufacturers for medical supplies and drugs. HOLN-contracted prices are honored at several distributors, including *Oncology Supply* and *Oncology Therapeutics Network*, among others. **A complete current price list of HOLN contracted products** is available from the ANCO office or online at www.holn.org.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Annual Election

Four seats on the ANCO Board of Directors are up for election in 2005. ANCO seeks nominations for candidates for these seats. This year's election will be conducted via mail ballot in December. Candidates with the top four vote totals will serve for three years (i.e., from 2006-2008, inclusive). Nominate an ANCO member (including yourself) to stand for election to the Board via FAX to the ANCO office at (415) 472-3961 no later than November 18th.

Board of Directors

The ANCO *Board of Directors* meets regularly 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* teleconference will take place on November 9th. Please call José Luis González, *ANCO Executive Director*, at (415) 472-3960 if you wish to participate in a future meeting.

Individual Member News

Jennifer Lucas, M.D., will receive the 2005 Medical Award from the *Lymphoma Research Foundation* at its 2nd Annual Rosetta Gala in San Francisco on Monday, October 24th.

The ANCO Directory of Members & Membership Information 2005 was published and mailed in June to all physician members; nurse and office manager contacts; and, Corporate Member representatives. Additional copies are available from the ANCO office upon request. The next *Directory* will be published in June 2006.

The following update(s) to the *Directory* should be inserted in the appropriate location(s):

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Corporate Member News

ANCO thanks the following **Corporate Members** for their generous support that enables ANCO to grow and expand its services for the 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:

*AMGEN • APP/Abraxis Oncology
Bayer Oncology/Onyx Pharmaceuticals
Berlex Laboratories • biogenIDEC
Bristol-Myers Squibb Oncology
Cell Therapeutics • Chiron Corporation
Enzon Pharmaceuticals
Genentech BioOncology
Genitope Corporation • Genomic Health
GlaxoSmithKline
International Oncology Network
Lash Group Healthcare Consultants
Lilly Oncology • Matrix Oncology
MedImmune Oncology • MGI Pharma
Millennium • National Oncology Alliance
Novartis Oncology • Oncology Supply
Oncology Therapeutics Network • Onmark
Ortho Biotech/Tibotec Therapeutics
OSI Pharmaceuticals • Pfizer Oncology
Roche Oncology • Sanofi Aventis Oncology
Schering-Plough Oncology • SuperGen
US Oncology • Wyeth Oncology*

We especially wish to thank and welcome *Enzon Pharmaceuticals* and *Onmark* as new Corporate Members in 2005. *AstraZeneca*, *Ligand Pharmaceuticals*, and *Oncotech* have not renewed their Corporate Membership for 2005.

Bayer Oncology/Onyx Pharmaceuticals seeks patients with advanced kidney cancer for a new protocol to evaluate an oral investigational drug. Patients must have advanced renal cell carcinoma (confirmed unresectable, recurrent, or metastatic disease) and meet all additional criteria. Study medication is available at no cost to qualified patients. For more information, please call (866) 639-2827.

biogenIDEC and *Genentech BioOncology* are supporting *Understanding Community Oncology Coding Guidelines for Optimal Patient Care*, a CD-ROM self-study CE program for oncology practice administrators and community

oncologists featuring Michele Weiss. An order form is available from the ANCO office.

Millennium is supporting the *Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation's* on-line series of monthly (through December 2005) *Great Debates: Case-based Analyses of Treatment Options in Multiple Myeloma*. Visit www.multiplemyeloma.org to view the cases.

Pfizer Oncology is supporting the *Johns Hopkins School of Medicine* web teleconferences on breast cancer. Visit www.ernjreg.com/jhutelecon for more information.

PhRMA has printed a **directory of patient assistance programs** offered by its member companies that provide free or reduced price medicine to people in need. Download this directory at www.asco.org/asco/downloads/PhRMA_Brochure.pdf. In addition, the *Patient Access Network Foundation* (PANF) is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving access to needed health services for insured patients who cannot afford the out-of-pocket costs associated with their treatment. Patients or providers can contact PANF directly at (866) 316-PANF (7263) or visit www.patientaccessnetwork.org for more information. Finally, the *Patient Advocate Foundation* (PAF) helps lung cancer patients with co-payments for pharmaceutical treatments. Patients may enroll in the Co-Pay Relief program by calling (866) 512-3861 or visiting www.copays.org or www.patientadvocate.org.

Institutional Member News

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 being organized by our Institutional Members, please visit:

- cancer.stanfordhospital.com/newsEvents/events/default

- www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/cme/Confrnce/Confrnce.htm
- www.cme.ucsf.edu/cme/index.aspx?Display=Date

UCD's online CME pain management courses are now available at www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/cme/DistEd/WebEvents/PainEvents.htm.

Stanford's *Advances in Hematology 2005* takes place in Palo Alto on November 4-5th. Visit hematology.stanford.edu/advances_in_heme/index.html for more information.

UCD's 6th *Annual Advances in Oncology: Updates from ASCO, ACCR, and SWOG* takes place in Sacramento on November 5th. Visit www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/cme/Confrnce/ONCOL06_11-5-05.pdf for more information.

The 7th *Annual UCSF/UCD Thoracic Oncology Conference* takes place in San Francisco on November 12th. Visit www.cme.ucsf.edu/cme/CourseDetail.aspx?coursenumber=MSU06002 for more information.

UCSF's 5th *Annual Clinical Cancer Update* takes place in Lake Tahoe on January 13-15th, 2006. Visit www.cme.ucsf.edu/cme/CourseDetail.aspx?coursenumber=MSU06003 for more information.

Clinical Trial News

ANCO members can obtain information about Institutional Member's clinical trials, including the latest edition of UCSF's *GI Oncology Trials Newsletter*, at www.anco-online.org/trials.html.

BreastCancerTrials.org (BCT) is a web-based service to match breast cancer patients with clinical trials sponsored by the *National Cancer Institute's (NCI) Center for Bioinformatics*, the *University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) Comprehensive Cancer Center*, and the *Center of Excellence for Breast Cancer Care*. Patients looking for trials may enter detailed information about their cancer history into a completely confidential and secure online database. The patient's Personal Health Record (PHR) is used to match the patient with breast cancer trials that medical researchers have registered with BCT. BCT is a pilot project with approximately 50 breast cancer trials located in and around the

San Francisco Bay Area and Sacramento. Visit www.breastcancertrials.org for more information.

Learn more about **California's law requiring the coverage of routine care costs for patients enrolled in clinical trials** at www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/cancer/clinical_trials/bigc/ where you can download ANCO's patient education brochure on SB37. **The National Cancer Institute (NCI) also has a Clinical Trials Education Series to help recruit patients.** It is available from (800) 4-CANCER or www.cancer.gov/publications.

Publications, Services, & Surveys

The September *Journal of Oncology Practice* (JOP; www.jopasco.org) highlights pay-for-performance which is quickly defining the new era of quality cancer care. CMS Administrator Mark McClellan, M.D., has paid considerable attention to programs that measure and implement quality cancer care in oncology practices. The *Quality Cancer Care Demonstration* project, which aims to reduce costs by avoiding hospitalization due to complications, incorporates the measurement of pain, nausea, vomiting, and fatigue into billing codes available to oncology practices. The *National Quality Forum (NQF)* aims to standardize measurement of quality cancer care. ASCO's own *Quality Oncology Practice Initiative (QOPI)*, which Dr. McClellan has commended as a "model for quality innovation," is featured for its work helping oncologists improve care in their own practices. QOPI ultimately aims to help to create a culture of self-examination for oncology practices to review how they can improve the delivery of care to their patients.