

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 13th.

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 hematology/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, 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.]

Cancer care issues are a focus on *Capitol Hill* and ASCO has been participating in key activities. In addition, legislation addressing reimbursement for medical imaging services, a fix for the flawed sustainable growth rate (SGR) formula, and NIH reauthorization are at the fore as *Congress* is winding down before the mid-term elections.

**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 oncologists and hematologists 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.

The *Access to Medical Imaging Coalition* (AMIC), of which ASCO is a member, released a report demonstrating that if cuts to medical imaging services proposed by the *Deficit Reduction Act* (DRA) are implemented, then practices will be substantially under-reimbursed for providing most of these services. The study analyzed 145 codes that would be affected by the DRA payment limits and found that 87% of the procedures would be reimbursed at below the cost of providing them in the doctor's office. The report used Medicare claims data and 2006 payment rates from the *CMS Physician Fee Schedule* and *Hospital Outpatient Payment System* to make cross-site spending comparisons and to assess the DRA reductions in relation to the costs of performing the procedures. It also factored in the expected volume in both the physician office and hospital outpatient settings. The analysis did not take into account proposed CMS changes in the physician fee schedule or the hospital outpatient payment system that the agency published for 2007. ASCO supports the *Access to Medical Imaging Act* (HR5704/S3795), which would delay the cuts in Medicare payments for medical imaging that are currently scheduled to go into effect in 2007. Contact your *Congressional Representative* to urge them to support this legislation to ensure that these services remain available to your patients.

Currently, multiple proposals aimed at fixing the flawed sustainable growth rate (SGR) formula are being floated on *Capitol Hill*. If a fix is not enacted, CMS is estimating there will be a 5.1% cut to physician payments in 2007. One proposal being developed by the *House Ways and Means Committee* would freeze physician payments for one year and offer a "bonus" payment of 2.5% to 2.8% to physicians that report quality measures in subsequent years. The proposal does not clarify what measures would qualify a physician for a bonus. Another proposal under development by the *House Energy and Commerce Committee* would add 0.5% to physician payments for three years starting in 2007. The proposal also would give physicians a bonus 0.25% payment for participating in quality reporting activities. ASCO leadership and staff are reviewing these proposals and will keep membership up-to-date as more information

becomes available. For more information, contact ASCO's *Cancer Policy & Clinical Affairs Department* at (703) 299-1050 or at publicpolicy@asco.org.

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.]

The ANCO *Board of Directors* has endorsed **Proposition 86, the Tobacco Tax of 2006**, appearing on the November ballot. ANCO encourages all members to support this initiative. Proposition 86 would increase the state's tobacco tax by \$.13 per cigarette (\$2.60 per pack) to provide financial help to some of California's major health challenges. The tax would raise approximately \$2.1B. After providing backfill funds to Proposition 10 programs (\$170M), the funds will be distributed to treatment (53%), prevention (42%), and research (5%) programs.

California law (AB487) requires physicians to complete 12 hours of continuing medical education (CME) in pain management and the care of terminally ill and dying patients by the end of 2006. Doctors licensed in California after 2002 (when the law was enacted) have four years from the date of licensure to complete this CME requirement. CMA's next presentation of *Pain, Palliation, & Politics: Pain Management and End-of-Life Care in California's Regulatory Environment* takes place on December 1st & 2nd at the *Disneyland Hotel* in Anaheim. CMA tailored this program to meet the needs of physicians who do not specialize in pain medicine. Offering 14 hours of Category I CME, this program completely fulfills California's AB487 mandate. CMA members pay a \$335 registration fee; the nonmember registration fee is \$600. Register early and get \$40 off the registration fee. Visit www.calphys.org/html/cc205.asp for more information or contact CMA's pain management seminar hotline at (415) 882-3330. CMA and the *University of*

California, San Diego, have also launched a unique case-based CME program entitled *Pain Management: A Case-Based CME Program for Physicians* on DVD that physicians can use to receive their State-mandated CME. Contact UCSD at (888) 229-6263 for more information.

NHIC/Medicare, DHS/MediCal, & Private Payers

[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.]

Effective October 1st, Medicare will only generate HIPAA-compliant *Electronic Remittance Advice* (ERA) transactions

(transaction 835 version 004010A1) to all electronic remittance advice receivers. In doing so, Medicare will stop sending electronic remittance advice in any version other than the standard HIPAA version (835 version 004010A1), or in any other format (e.g., NSF). For more information on *Ending the Contingency for Remittance Advice*, visit www.cms.hhs.gov/MLN MattersArticles/downloads/SE0646.pdf.

Form CMS-1500 (12-90) is being revised to accommodate the reporting of the NPI. Form CMS-1500 (08-05) will be effective October 1st, but will not be mandated for use until February 1st, 2007. There will be a dual acceptability period of the current and the revised forms. To learn more about the revised form, visit www.cms.hhs.gov/transmittals/downloads/R899CP.pdf.

Health care providers are required by law to apply for a *National Provider Identifier* (NPI).

For complete information, visit www.cms.hhs.gov/NationalProvIdentStand. 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. NPI's are being implemented as follows:

- Beginning October 2nd, and through May 22nd, 2007, systems will accept an

existing legacy Medicare number and/or an NPI.

The *Medicare B Resource* (September 2006) is available online at www.medicarenhic.com/news/provider_news/mbr_sept06.pdf. Among the items most relevant to hematology/oncology are:

- July 2006 Quarterly ASP
- Extension of CAP Physician Election Period
- Non-Physician Practitioner Payment for **Care Plan Oversight**
- Quarterly Update to CCI Edits
- **Drug Administration** Coding and Payment Policy
- Medicare Contractor Annual Update to the ICD-9-CM
- Payment for PET Scans in CMS-approved Clinical Trials and Coverage with Evidence Development
- July Update to the 2006 Medicare **Physician Fee Schedule**

The most recent *NHIC/Medicare Medicare Advisory Forum* (MAF) meeting/teleconference took place on September 13th. While no hematology/oncology-specific agenda items were discussed, those items discussed most relevant to hematology/oncology were:

- Duplicate claim submissions and the carrier bulletin board system article published (and available at www.medicarenhic.com/providers/articles/dupsusecabbs_0606.htm).
- Top ten duplicate claim submissions by specialty article published (and available at www.medicarenhic.com/providers/articles/dupbyspec_0806.htm).

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

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*).

DHS/MediCal is phasing out mandatory use of their X-codes in favor of traditional HCPCS codes for injectible drugs for services on or after November 1st. In its September *Update* DHS/MediCal has:

- uploaded the new J-code (2425) for palifermin.
- announced conversion to J-code billing for darbepoetin alfa and epoetin alfa (previously codes X7493 and X7030 were required).
- announced some dose limitations and billing exclusions for paclitaxel.

In addition, DHS/MediCal announced plans to enforce mandatory NDC billing for injectible drugs starting in January 2008. Providers are invited to participate in a roundtable discussion regarding this mandate on October 25th at 1:30PM at the *Department of Health Services Auditorium*, 1500 Capitol Avenue, in Sacramento.

EDUCATION

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

Good Business=Good Medicine

ANCO will sponsor two talks for oncologists and oncology practice managers entitled *Good Business=Good Medicine* with John Hennessey, *Executive Director, Kansas City Cancer Center*, and Rosemarie Nelson, *Principal, MGMA Health Care Consulting Group*, on Wednesday, October 11th at the *Hyatt Regency*, Sacramento, and Thursday, October 12th, at the *Fairmont San José*. Hennessey and Nelson will provide physician leaders and practice administrators a better understanding of the business of oncology, advice on implementing sound business practices to the management of their clinical practice, and a demonstration of how sound business practices contribute to quality oncology care. These meetings are supported in part by *Genomic Health*, *Novartis Oncology*, and *Oncology Pharmaceutical Services*. A copy of the meeting announcement is attached to this edition of the ANCO FAX News. Download a copy at www.anco-online.org/ancoops.html.

New Taxane-Based Strategies in the Chemotherapy of Advanced and Early Stage Breast Cancer

ANCO recognizes *Breast Cancer Awareness Month* with a talk for oncologists and oncology nurses entitled *New Taxane-Based Strategies in the Chemotherapy of Advanced and Early Stage Breast Cancer* with Andrew D. Seidman, M.D., *Weill College of Medicine, Cornell University*, and *Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center*, on Tuesday, October 17th at the *Lafayette Park Hotel*. Seidman will provide a comprehensive review of current breast cancer treatment. This meeting is supported by *Abraxis Oncology*. A copy of the meeting announcement is attached to this edition of the ANCO FAX News. Download a copy at www.anco-online.org/bcam.html.

ANCO 2006 Annual Meeting Postponed

ANCO's 2006 *Annual Meeting* has been indefinitely postponed. The reasons are both personal and professional. First, ANCO has been unable to arrange a substantially robust agenda/faculty to successfully attract a sufficient audience. Second, and contributing to the first, is that José Luis González's sister (and mother's caregiver) has been stricken by cervical cancer and he has been busy helping her through this difficult time. The ANCO *Board* made the decision to postpone the 2006 *Annual Meeting* so as to arrange for a more successful event no later than April 2007. ANCO members will be informed as soon as a new date is set.

Additional Education Meetings

Other meetings of possible interest to ANCO member practices are:

October 4th
Medical Update on the Hormonal Treatment of Breast Cancer
 CancerCare
 Telephone Education Workshop

October 9-15th
CancerGuides 2006
 Center for Mind-Body Medicine
 Chicago, IL

October 15-18th
 26th Annual Oncology Nurses Symposium
 Scripps Cancer Center
 San Diego

October 18th-21st
 Oncology Congress
 New York, NY

October 27-29th
 North American Educational Forum on Lymphoma
 Lymphoma Research Foundation
 Los Angeles

October 27-29th
 Clinical Trials Workshop
 American Society of Clinical Oncology
 Schaumburg, IL

October 29th-31st
 2006 Fall Conference
 California Hospice Foundation
 Newport Beach

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).]

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, 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 hematology and 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 and Medicare & Quality Care Alerts/Updates
- 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.

ANCO continues to seek ways to make membership more beneficial. The *Board* constantly identifies, reviews, and approves of additional membership benefits. In addition to the benefits derived from its advocacy, educational, and information dissemination activities, ANCO members also benefit from group purchasing activities and value added services from a number of vendors, including:

- **Onmark, OTN's preferred group purchasing organization.** Contact Monique Weston at (650) 871-2108 or monique.weston@onmarkservices.com for more information.
- **Oncology Pharmaceutical Services (OPS),** a division of *US Oncology*. Contact Sean Taylor at (415) 235-4673 or sean.taylor@usonology.com for more information.

California Oncology Consortium (COC)

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

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Annual Election

Four seats on the ANCO *Board of Directors* are up for election in 2006. 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 2007-2009, 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 22nd.

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 8th. Please call José Luis González, ANCO *Executive Director*, at (415) 472-3960 if you wish to participate in a future meeting.

Individual Member News

The ANCO *Directory of Members 2006* was published and mailed to ANCO physician members; nurse and office manager contacts; and Corporate Member representatives at the end of June. Additional copies are available from the ANCO office upon request. Please verify your *Directory* entry and contact the ANCO office with any corrections, additions, and/or deletions. The next *Directory* will be published in June 2007.

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 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:

AMGEN • APP/Abraxis Oncology
AstraZeneca

Bayer Oncology/Onyx Pharmaceuticals

Berlex Laboratories • biogenIDEC

Bristol-Myers Squibb Oncology

Cephalon Oncology • Clariant Diagnostics

Enzon Pharmaceuticals

Genentech BioOncology

*Genitope Corporation • Genomic Health
GlaxoSmithKline
International Oncology Network
Lash Group Healthcare Consultants
Lilly Oncology • Matrix Oncology
McKesson Specialty Oncology Services
MedImmune Oncology • MGI Pharma
Millennium • Novartis Oncology
Oncology Pharmaceutical Services
Oncology Supply • OTN • Onmark
Ortho Biotech/Tibotec Therapeutics
OSI Pharmaceuticals • Pfizer Oncology
Pharmion • Roche Oncology
Sanofi Aventis Oncology
Schering-Plough Oncology • SuperGen*

We especially wish to thank and welcome *AstraZeneca*, *Clariant Diagnostics*, and *Pharmion* as new Corporate Members in 2006. We regret to announce that *Chiron Corporation* and *Wyeth Oncology* are no longer Corporate Members of ANCO.

Cephalon informs ANCO that **Fentora** has been approved by the **United States Food and Drug Administration** for the management of **breakthrough pain in patients with cancer**. This is the first pain medicine in seven years and the first buccal tablet to be approved for the management of breakthrough pain in patients with cancer.

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:

- med.stanford.edu/seminars/cme-all.jsp?qcme=on
- www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/cme/conferences
- www.cme.ucsf.edu/cme/index.aspx?Display=Date

Simply the Best: The Bonnie J. Addario A Breath Away from the Cure Foundation's Annual Dinner Gala takes place in San Francisco on November 9th. ANCO members *Thierry Jahan, M.D.*, and *Fred Marcus, M.D.*, will be honored at this event. For more information, please call (415) 357-1278 or visit www.abaftc.org.

UCSF's ***Pain Management and End-of-Life Care*** takes place in San Francisco on November 16-17th. This course is designed for all physicians, nurses, and pharmacists who care for patients in pain or with life-threatening illness. It meets California's requirement that physicians take 12 hours of CME in pain and palliative care. Visit www.cme.ucsf.edu/cme/CourseDetail.aspx?coursenumber=MDM06P26 for more information.

The ***8th Annual UCSF/UCD Thoracic Oncology Conference*** takes place in San Francisco on November 18th. Visit www.cme.ucsf.edu/cme/CourseDetail.aspx?coursenumber=MSU07004 for more information.

Stanford's ***Perspectives on Pain and Palliative Care*** takes place on December 8-9th in Palo Alto. Visit med.stanford.edu/seminars/details-documents.jsp?semid=8353 for more information.

UCSF's ***6th Annual Clinical Cancer Update*** takes place at Lake Tahoe on January 26-27th, 2007. Visit www.cme.ucsf.edu/cme/CourseDetail.aspx?coursenumber=MSU07006 for more information.

UCD's **online CME pain management courses** are now available at www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/cme/DistEd/WebEvents/PainEvents.htm. In addition, UCD is offering several **live pain management courses** in California and Hawaii. Visit www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/cme/Confrence/Confrence.htm for additional information.

Clinical Trial News

BreastCancerTrials.org (BCT) is a web-based, **pilot project, 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. 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.

Patient News

ASCO, in association with *People Living With Cancer* (PLWC), has prepared and published several *Guides to Cancer*. These *Guides* provide information for patients on breast, colorectal, lung, and prostate cancers. For more information, please contact ASCO's *Communications and Patient Information Department* at (703) 519-2927 or contactus@plwc.org.

CaringBridge is a nonprofit organization providing the most widely used free online service connecting patients to friends and families during their challenging times. For additional information for you and your patients, visit www.caringbridge.com.

The **HealthWell Foundation**, a non-profit, charitable organization, provides financial assistance to eligible patients to cover certain out-of-pocket health care costs, including coinsurance, copayments, and deductibles; health insurance premiums; and, the Medicare "donut hole" coverage gap. The *HealthWell Foundation* offers assistance in several disease areas, including the following that may be of interest to hematology/oncology providers and case managers:

- Chemotherapy induced anemia
- Chemotherapy induced neutropenia
- Multiple myeloma
- Myelodysplastic syndromes

Applications are available online at www.healthwellfoundation.org or by calling

(800) 675-8416.

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.

The PAF *Co-Pay Relief Program* (CPR) currently provides financial assistance to eligible patients who are being treated for breast, colon, kidney, lung, pancreatic, and/or prostate cancers, lymphoma, macular degeneration, sarcoma, autoimmune disorders, and secondary issues as a result of chemotherapy treatment. Patients must financially and medically qualify to access co-payment assistance. Patients and physicians can contact the PAF CPR at (866) 512-3861 to initiate a request for assistance or request additional information, or visit www.copays.org or www.patientadvocate.org.

Publications, Services, & Surveys

The Quality Oncology Practice Initiative (QOPI) is a practice-based quality improvement program developed by ASCO volunteers. QOPI includes a set of quality measures, a specified chart selection methodology, a secure system for data entry, automated data analysis and reporting, and a network of resources for improvement. Twice a year, staff at participating practices conduct a retrospective review of patient charts. Following every data collection period, the QOPI system generates a report for each practice. QOPI data can be used to satisfy the new practice performance improvement requirement for ABIM *Maintenance of Certification*. Register for QOPI at www.asco.org/QOPI.

The September/October (Vol. 21, No. 5) issue of ACCC's *Oncology Issues* features articles on patient assistance programs, reimbursement for nutrition services, and an ASCO research round-up. Visit www.accc-cancer.org/ONIS/onis_archives.asp to view these articles.

The September (Vol. 2, Issue 5) issue of ASCO's *Journal of Oncology Practice* features articles discussing quality, evidence-based oncology and off-label oncology drug uses, reimbursement for preventive counseling services, and EHRs. Visit www.jopasco.org to view these articles.