

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

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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 November 10th.

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.]

ASCO is disturbed by the generalizations made in an *NBC Nightly News* story airing on Wednesday, October 18th. The story reports that oncologists benefited inappropriately from the 2005 *Oncology Demonstration Project*. The story was spurred by the *Office of Inspector General's* report released earlier this year assessing the

**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 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.

impact of the 2005 *Oncology Demonstration Project*. Regrettably, this story failed to make the most salient point, which is that the 2005 *Oncology Demonstration Project* enabled practices to provide important cancer care and services during a time when the entire system was experiencing severe cuts. While ASCO was pleased with CMS' on-air defense of the *Project*, the segment failed to include other important findings from the OIG report, including: 1) the OIG report analyzes a demonstration project that is no longer being used; 2) the 2005 demonstration project enabled CMS to collect quality care data from oncology practices in a first step toward pay-for-performance; and, 3) the 2005 project was a lead-in to an improved 2006 demonstration project that is gathering much more detailed information from practices on the extent to which they adhere to quality evidence-based guidelines for patient care. CMS demonstration projects are an important facet in oncologists' ability to continue to provide quality care to cancer patients, and ASCO will continue to urge CMS to implement such projects in 2007 and beyond. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact ASCO's *Communications Department* at (703) 519-1427 or heumannj@asco.org.

ASCO recently submitted comments to CMS on the proposed changes to the *Medicare Physician Fee Schedule* and other Part B payment changes. In the comments, ASCO expressed concern that a planned reduction of 5.1% in the physician fee schedule conversion factor will have an adverse effect on beneficiary access to high quality cancer care. ASCO stated that CMS must refrain from any further reductions in payment amounts for multiple imaging procedures. ASCO also asked CMS to provide extensive guidance on the proper methodology for calculating ASP, including the definition of a service fee.

The *American Medical Association* (AMA) and the *Medical Group Management Association* (MGMA) have developed state-by-state profiles to assess the impact of the proposed physician payment cuts that will occur in 2007 if the *Sustainable Growth Rate* (SRG) formula is not fixed. By 2015, the 2006 Medicare Trustees report predicts that Medicare physician payment rates will be cut by about 40% due to the flawed

payment update formula. An AMA survey conducted in June shows that 45% of physicians will either stop accepting or decrease the number of new Medicare patients they accept if Medicare payments are cut in 2007. From 2007-2015, Medicare payments in California will be cut by \$17.52B. For physicians in California, the average cut will be \$20,000 per year per physician. The 2007 cut to California physicians will be \$300 million due to the negative 5% update.

Congress is in recess and Representatives are now in their home districts. This is an opportunity for you to contact your Representative to discuss the challenges and difficulties you are facing in your practice as you work to provide quality care for people with cancer. The next few months will be a critical time for cancer care. The upcoming elections will be much watched and undoubtedly will have an impact on quality cancer care initiatives when *Congress* returns at the end of November. ASCO continues to actively engage in the legislative and regulatory processes and is working with others in the cancer care community who are committed to credible and effective advocacy in Washington, D.C. You can communicate your concerns to your *Representatives* and *Senators* while they are back in their home districts. Ask your *Congressional Representative* to support ASCO's four legislative priorities, as follows:

- **Addressing the issue of "underwater" drugs:** HR5179, introduced by *Representative* Ralph Hall, would give CMS the authority to increase drug payments when practices and institutions cannot obtain drugs for the Medicare payment rate. It would also remove prompt-pay discounts that are not passed on to practices and institutions from the *Average Sales Price* (ASP) formula, to better reflect available market prices.
- **Delaying the impending imaging cuts:** HR5704/S3795, the *Access to Medical Imaging Act*, introduced by *Representative* Joe Pitts and *Senator* Gordon Smith, would delay deep cuts in reimbursement for medical imaging scheduled to go into effect in 2007. If passed, this legislation would protect access to these essential

services that enhance patient care while a study is conducted on the potential access issues associated with the cuts.

- **Reversing the physician fee schedule cut:** CMS is estimating a 5.1% cut to physician payments due to the flawed *Sustainable Growth Rate* (SGR) formula. ASCO is lobbying *Congress* to pass legislation to reverse this cut and provide physicians with a positive update.
- **Obtain recognition for the full spectrum of oncology services:** ASCO supports efforts such as HR5465, legislation introduced this Summer by *Representatives* Lois Capps and Tom Davis, which would establish a new Medicare service for comprehensive cancer care planning at the time of diagnosis through the end of active treatment and beyond.

To find your *Congressional Representative*, visit capwiz.com/asco. Also, you can share your stories with ASCO leaders and staff by sending an e-mail to publicpolicy@asco.org. Representatives from ASCO are on *Capitol Hill* talking to *Congressional Representatives* and their staffs nearly every day and can communicate your concerns to our leaders in *Congress*.

ANCO and ASCO continue to work towards ensuring that people with cancer have access to quality cancer care in the community. Practice resources are available at www.anco-online.org and www.asco.org/mma. Members may also 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. Specifically:

- The October 2006 quarterly update for the *Average Sales Price* (ASP) Medicare Part B drugs pricing file has been posted on the CMS website at www.cms.hhs.gov/McrPartBDrugAvgSalesPrice/02_aspfiles.asp.

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.]

The 2007 physician election period for the Medicare Part B Drug *Competitive Acquisition Program* (CAP) began on October 1st and concludes on November 15th. CAP is an alternative to the *Average Sales Price* (ASP) method of acquiring many drugs and biologicals administered incident to a physician's services. Additional information about the CAP is available at www.cms.hhs.gov/CompetitiveAcquisforBios/01_overview.asp. Additional information about the 2007 CAP physician election process is at www.cms.hhs.gov/CompetitiveAcquisforBios/02_infophys.asp. The list of drugs supplied by the CAP vendor, including NDCs, is in the *Downloads* section at www.cms.hhs.gov/CompetitiveAcquisforBios/15_Approved_Vendor.asp. CAP physician election is an annual process that provides an opportunity for physicians who are not participating in the CAP to join. Physicians who are currently participating in the CAP must submit an election form in order to continue participation or to terminate participation. Physicians who are not participating in the CAP and do not wish to participate in the CAP at this time are not required to take any action. Completed and signed physician election forms should be returned by mail to your local carrier. Forms must be postmarked on or before November 15th. Finally, physicians participating in the CAP are encouraged to subscribe to the new CMS-CAP-Physicians-L mailing list to receive pertinent and timely information regarding the CAP. Go to www.cms.hhs.gov/apps/maillinglists/default.asp?audience=3, and then subscribe to the CMS-CAP-Physicians-L mailing list.

The *Medicare B Resource* (September 2006) is available online at www.medicarenhic.com/news/provider_news/mbr_sept06.pdf.

The brochure entitled *The Medicare Appeals Process: Five Levels to Protect Providers, Physicians and Other Suppliers* has been updated and is now available at www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/MedicareAppealsProcess.pdf. This brochure provides an overview of the Medicare Part A and Part B administrative appeals process available to providers, physicians, and other suppliers who provide services and supplies to Medicare beneficiaries.

An electronic version of the *Evaluation & Management Services Guide*, which provides evaluation and management services information regarding medical record documentation; *International Classification of Diseases, 9th Revision, Clinical Modification*; *American Medical Association Current Procedural Terminology Codes*; and, key elements of service is now available. Visit www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/eval_mgmt_serv_guide.pdf to download your copy.

The revised *Medicare Physician Guide: A Resource for Residents, Practicing Physicians, and Other Health Care Professionals* (previously titled *Medicare Resident & New Physician Guide: Helping Health Care Professionals Navigate Medicare*) is now available in downloadable format on the Medicare Learning Network Publication Page located at www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/MPUB/list.asp.

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 organizes clinical and professional education meetings throughout the year and throughout Northern California.]

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

ANCO recognized *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 by 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 provided a comprehensive review of current breast cancer treatment. Approximately 60 physicians, nurses, and others attended the meeting. This meeting was supported by *Abraxis Oncology*.

Newer Approaches in the Treatment of Multiple Myeloma: Do Emerging Therapies Offer an Advantage?

ANCO is helping the *Leukemia & Lymphoma Society* announce *Newer Approaches in the Treatment of Multiple Myeloma: Do Emerging Therapies Offer an Advantage?* with Ann Mohrbacher, M.D., Associate Professor of Medicine, USC Keck School of Medicine. This program will take place on Wednesday, November 15th, at *Farallon Restaurant* in San Francisco. This program is supported by *Celgene*. Contact the ANCO office for additional information or visit www.dlnrequest.com/registration to register.

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 29th-31st
2006 Fall Conference

California Hospice Foundation
Newport Beach

October 31st
Updates on Cutaneous Lymphoma Cancer Care
Telephone Education Workshop

November 1st-3rd
Multidisciplinary Approaches to Cancer Care
Mills-Peninsula Health Services
Napa

November 9th
Progress in the Treatment of Lung Cancer Cancer Care
Telephone Education Workshop

November 9-10th
Designing a Physician Compensation Plan for Your Practice
Medical Group Management Association
St. Louis

November 10th
Updates on Cutaneous Lymphoma Cancer Care
Telephone Education Workshop

November 10-12th
ONS Institutes of Learning
Oncology Nursing Society
Pittsburg, PA

November 11-12th
Managing Physician Performance
Medical Group Management Association
St. Louis

November 15th
The Future Role of Cancer Vaccines Cancer Care
Telephone Education Workshop

November 17th
New Trends in the Treatment of Head and Neck Cancer: Update from ASCO Cancer Care
Telephone Education Workshop

November 29th
Difficult Side Effects of Breast Cancer Treatment: Memory Changes, Lymphedema, and Neuropathy Cancer Care
Telephone Education Workshop

December 9-12th
48th Annual Meeting & Exposition
 American Society of Hematology
 Orlando, FL

December 19th
*Chronic Myelogenous Leukemia (CML): Update
 from the American Society of Hematology (ASH)
 Annual Meeting*
CancerCare
 Telephone Education Workshop

December 20th
*The Latest Developments Reported at the 29th
 Annual San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium*
CancerCare
 Telephone Education Workshop

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

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

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 Cancer Policy Today
- ASH Practice Update
- 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:

- *California Oncology Consortium (COC) Group Purchasing Organization (GPO)*. 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. Contact your local ION/OS or McKesson/NOA representatives for more information.
- *Oncology Pharmaceutical Services (OPS)*, a division of *US Oncology*. Contact Sean Taylor at (415) 235-4673 or sean.taylor@usoncology.com for more information.
- *Onmark*, OTN's preferred group purchasing organization. Contact Monique Weston at (650) 871-2108 or monique.weston@onmarkservices.com for more information.

ANCO and *IntrinsiQ Research* have agreed to make *IntelliDose*, a clinical oncology software solution, available to ANCO members at a

significant discount. In addition, ancillary products/services, and maintenance fees are will also be discounted for ANCO member practices. ANCO FAXed broadcasted on October 18th and *IntrinsiQ Research* recently mailed information regarding the *ANCO/IntelliDose Discount Program* to all ANCO member practices. Representatives from *IntrinsiQ Research* will also be calling ANCO member practices to discuss the *Program* in detail. Members may also contact Kris Beinder at *IntrinsiQ* directly at (800) 565-2279, x151 or kbeinder@intrinsiq.com. For more information about *IntrinsiQ Research* and *IntelliDose*, please visit www.intrinsiq.com.

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.

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 ***Grand Rounds: Ovarian Cancer Prevention, Detection, and Treatment*** takes place at Stanford on November 20th. Visit

med.stanford.edu/seminars/details-documents.jsp?semid=10503 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.

UCSF's *Current Controversies in Urologic Oncology* takes place in San Francisco on February 2nd-3rd, 2007. Visit www.cme.ucsf.edu/cme/CourseDetail.aspx?coursenumber=MUR07001 for more information.

The *9th Annual Northern California Tumor Board at Silverado* will be presented by the *Stanford University School of Medicine* on March 16-18th, 2007. Registration and case submission materials can be obtained from Jennifer Schafer at (650) 724-2288 or schafer@stanford.edu. Visit med.stanford.edu/seminars/details-documents.jsp?semid=10331 for additional information.

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 • Onmark
Ortho Biotech/Tibotec Therapeutics
OSI Pharmaceutical • OTN
Pfizer Oncology • Pharmion
Roche Oncology • Sanofi Aventis Oncology
Schering-Plough Oncology • SuperGen*

Renewal packages for ANCO 2007 Corporate Memberships were mailed to Corporate Member contacts on October 25th.

Genentech BioOncology informs ANCO that the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has 1) approved Avastin to be used in combination with intravenous 5-FU-based chemotherapy for the first- or second-line treatment of patients with metastatic carcinoma of the colon or rectum, and 2) approved Avastin to be used in combination with carboplatin and paclitaxel chemotherapy for the first-line treatment of patients with unresectable, locally advanced, recurrent or metastatic non-squamous, non-small cell lung cancer. The latter approval is based on a Phase III study (E4599) that showed Avastin in combination with chemotherapy resulted in a 25 percent improvement in overall survival compared to chemotherapy alone.

Genentech BioOncology is also hosting Targeting VEGF in Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer: An Overview of Avastin (bevacizumab) with Angela Davies M.D., *UC Davis Cancer Center* on November 13th at *Le Papillion*, 410 Saratoga Avenue, San José. Registration opens at 6:30PM with a 7:00 PM talk. Call your local *Genentech BioOncology* representative, the ANCO office, or (800) 586-5819 for more information and to register for this meeting.

Clinical Trial News

ANCO members can obtain information about Institutional Member's clinical trials at www.anco-online.org/trials.html.

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.

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.

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.