

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 12th. 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 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.]

ASCO continues to outreach to CMS and has formally requested that they reconsider the ESA NCD. CMS responded with six questions that ASCO is currently addressing. **ASCO also held a national audioconference on September 27th** that detailed the chain of events related to CMS's ESA NCD, listed the specific covered and non-covered indications under the NCD, provided guidance

**There is information in the
ANCO FAX News
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.

on when to refer to local coverage decisions (LCDs), outlined specific treatment decision making for the use of ESAs, and updated ASCO's current involvement in the ESA issue. Finally, ongoing challenges were identified and discussed. **An updated ASCO/ASH guideline on the use of ESAs in patients with cancer will be published in the Fall of 2007.** A recording of the audioconference and the presentation materials are available at www.asco.org/ESAAudiocall or via www.anco-online.org. **CMS's ESA NCD and FAQs are also available at www.anco-online.org.** **ASCO seeks member feedback on CMS's ESA NCD.** Please provide your input on the following questions:

- How has the ESA national Medicare coverage policy affected your practice?
- How is your practice planning to implement the new policy in terms of tracking and documentation?
- What concerns do you have about implementing the new policy?
- What additional clarification on the policy is needed?

Please email your responses to practice@asco.org. For more information, please contact ASCO's *Cancer Policy & Clinical Affairs Department* at (704) 299-1050 or publicpolicy@asco.org.

ASCO has joined 130 health and medical organizations to send a letter to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid urging the Senate to prevent a 10% reduction in physician payments due to take place in January 2008. To avert the scheduled cuts, ASCO called for two years of positive Medicare physician payment updates in the final *State Children's Health Insurance Program* (SCHIP) conference agreement. *Congress* will attempt to reach a compromise on a final version SCHIP when the *House* and *Senate* conference on this legislation.

The 2008 physician election period for the Medicare Part B Drug Competitive Acquisition Program (CAP) will begin on October 1st and conclude on November 15th. The CAP is a voluntary program that offers physicians the option to acquire many injectable and infused drugs they use in their practice from an approved CAP vendor, thus reducing the time they spend

buying and billing for drugs. The 2008 CAP program will run from January 1st to December 31st. Once a physician has elected to participate in CAP, they must obtain all drugs on the CAP drug list from the CAP drug vendor. Physicians can still continue to purchase and bill Medicare under the Average Sale Price (ASP) system for those drugs that are not provided by the physician's CAP vendor. Additional information about the CAP is available at www.cms.hhs.gov/CompetitiveAcquisforBios/01_overview.asp.

In response to requests from ASCO, CMS has updated the list of peer-reviewed journals that Medicare contractor medical directors may use as references for off-label uses of anti-cancer drugs. As a reminder, an off-label use of a drug in an anticancer chemotherapeutic regimen must be covered by Medicare Part B if the use is supported by peer-reviewed articles published in certain journals. Individual Medicare carriers have the authority to evaluate the literature and determine whether it supports the off-label use. Physicians may point contractor medical directors to peer-reviewed articles in discussing coverage. CMS issued a transmittal (www.cms.hhs.gov/transmittals/downloads/R78BP.pdf) announcing that the following journals will be accepted as of October 22nd:

Annals of Oncology
Biology of Blood and Marrow Transplantation
Bone Marrow Transplantation
Gynecologic Oncology
Clinical Cancer Research
International Journal of Radiation, Oncology, Biology, and Physics
Journal of NCCN
Radiation Oncology
Annals of Surgical Oncology
Journal of Urology
Lancet Oncology

These journals are added to the original list that includes:

American Journal of Medicine
Annals of Internal Medicine
The Journal of the American Medical Association
Journal of Clinical Oncology

Blood
Journal of the National Cancer Institute
The New England Journal of Medicine
British Journal of Cancer
British Journal of Hematology
British Medical Journal
Cancer
Drugs
European Journal of Cancer
Lancet
Leukemia

CMS's Physician Quality Reporting Initiative (PQRI) establishes a financial incentive for eligible professionals to participate in a voluntary quality-reporting program. Eligible professionals who successfully report a designated set of quality measures on claims for dates of service from July 1st to December 31st may earn a lump sum bonus payment in early 2008, subject to a cap, of 1.5% of total allowed charges for covered Medicare physician fee schedule services. You do not need to enroll to participate in the program. You must report the appropriate quality measure data on claims using G-codes and/or CPT codes. For complete information on PQRI, including a User Guide, Tool Kit for successful reporting, beneficiary letters, FAQs, and presentation materials from recent national provider calls, visit www.cms.hhs.gov/PQRI.

CMS's Doctor's Office Quality Information Technology University (DOQ-IT U) supports health information technology (HIT) in physicians' offices. DOQ-IT U is an interactive, Web-based tool designed to provide solo and small-to-medium sized physician practices with the education for successful HIT adoption. For more information, visit the DOQ-IT U website at elearning.qualitynet.org.

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, including:

- ASCO's *Adapting to Changes in Medicare 2007* PowerPoint presentation.
- The October 2007 quarterly update for the *Average Sales Price (ASP) Medicare Part B drugs pricing file*.

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.

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 coordinate advocacy activities in California.]

A CMA analysis of *Blue Cross's Prudent Buyer* contract has found that it is inconsistent with state laws and regulations, including the *Knox-Keene Act*. The contract, among other things, gives *Blue Cross* the authority to unilaterally decrease contracted payment rates if a physician refers patients to out-of-network providers. This provision not only improperly obstructs the physician-patient relationship and interferes with PPO patients' right to access out-of-network benefits, but is also a violation of California law, which requires insurers to give contracted physicians 45 days' notice of material changes to their contracts and an opportunity to terminate the contract if the new terms are not acceptable. Additionally, this provision is inconsistent with the RICO settlement, in which *Blue Cross* agreed to give 90 days' notice of any material contract change. CMA reminds physicians that before they sign a health plan contract, it is important to know what value that relationship will bring to their practice. Physicians do not have to accept contracts that are not mutually beneficial. To help physicians negotiate and manage complex third-party payor agreements, CMA has published a contracting tool kit entitled *Taking Charge: Steps to Evaluating Relationships and Preparing for Negotiations—A Focus on Payor Contracting* that is available free to members at the members-only website. Nonmembers can purchase the tool kit for \$100 in the CMA bookstore (call (800) 882-1262). This tool kit joins several other CMA tool kits (i.e., *Back to Basics: A Step-by-Step Guide to Maximizing Your Cash Flow, Getting*

Paid: Strategies to Maximize Reimbursement) aimed at empowering physician practices vis-à-vis their relationships with private payors. Finally, CMA has published a *Blue Cross of California Survival Kit* to help you assess the impact fee schedule changes will have on your practice based on your most commonly billed CPT codes. The CMA tool kit answers frequently asked questions and discusses the options for physicians who determine that the new contract terms would negatively impact their practices.

NHIC/Medicare, DHS/MediCal, & Private Payors

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

Health care providers are required by law to apply for a *National Provider Identifier* (NPI). At this point, any covered entity that is noncompliant, and has not implemented a contingency plan, is at risk for enforcement action. For complete information, visit www.cms.hhs.gov/NationalProvIdentStand. To apply for an NPI online, visit nppes.cms.hhs.gov or call the NPI enumerator to request a paper application at (800) 465-3203. NHIC/Medicare urges all physicians and providers to obtain their NPI and begin using it. If you wish to test your EDI transmissions with the NPI, please contact the EDI *Department* at (213) 593-6950 or (530) 634-7024 and they will be happy to work with you.

Physician NPI data is publicly available via a searchable on-line database. The online lookup returns NPIs and relevant demographic information, but does not disclose Social Security numbers, dates of birth, or IRS taxpayer identification numbers. To view the NPI Registry, visit nppes.cms.hhs.gov/NPPES/NPIRegistryHome.do or download the file at nppesdata.cms.hhs.gov/cms_NPI_files.html.

CMS recently learned that some clearinghouses are stripping NPIs before submitting claims to Medicare. While this will not affect your ability

to get paid, it will adversely affect your ability to participate in the PQRI. If you use a clearinghouse, then you should check with your clearinghouse to find out if it is stripping NPIs. If your clearinghouse is stripping NPIs, you may want to consider other billing options.

Effective September 17th, NHIC/Medicare began **editing the NPI/legacy ID combinations for validity against the NPI crosswalk file.** Where a match cannot be located on the crosswalk, claims will be rejected or returned to the provider. When the claim is returned, a provider should first verify that the correct NPI was submitted. If correct, you will need to verify that your legacy identifier (PIN) number corresponds with the information on file with the *National Plan and Provider Enumeration System* (NPPES). NPPES data may be checked on line at nppes.cms.hhs.gov. If your NPPES information is correct and you have included and matched ALL Medicare legacy identifiers with a corresponding NPI in NPPES, but you are experiencing provider identifier problems with your claims that contain an NPI, you may need to submit a Medicare enrollment application (i.e., the CMS-855). Please contact Customer Service at (877) 527-6613 if you need more information.

The *Medicare B Resource* (September 2007) is available online at www.medicarenhic.com/news/provider_news/mbr_sept07.pdf. Please note that the ESA article does not reflect current CMS coverage policy.

The most recent *NHIC/Medicare Provider Outreach, Education, and Advisory Group* (POEAG) meeting/teleconference took place on September 25th. Those items discussed most relevant to hematology/oncology were:

- oncology materials presented at the recently complete Medicare coverage convoy;
- RAC overpayment appeals address (PO Box 2808, Chico, CA 95927-2808); and,
- announcement of Medicare Administrative Contractor on or about September 28th.

The next *NHIC/Medicare* POEAG meeting/teleconference takes place on December 12th.

Visit www.medicarehnic.com/cal_prov/updates.shtml to learn the latest information (updated weekly) from NHIC/Medicare.

Effective September 17th, DHS/MediCal claims received on the old HCFA 1500 or UB-92 claim forms will be rejected and returned to the provider. To ensure claims processing, providers must submit claims on the new CMS-1500 or UB-04 claim form. Over-one-year claims must also be billed using the new CMS-1500 or UB-04 claim forms. For more detailed information, please see the claim form article located on the DHS/MediCal website (at files.medi-cal.ca.gov/pubsdoco/whatsnew_8699.asp). Should you have any questions or need additional information, please call the Telephone Service Center (TSC) at (800) 541-5555.

ANCO has communicated directly with Blue Shield of California with regard to its ESA coverage policies. *Blue Shield's* revised policies cover ESAs for MDS, raise the initiation HgB to 10 from 9, allow use of ESAs with anti-angiogenic treatment protocols, but do require the use of Procrit prior to Aranesp. (However, anecdotally, ANCO has learned that *Blue Shield's* formulary preference for one ESA can be successfully challenged using reasons not in their coverage policy.) A summary of the *Blue Shield* ESA coverage policy is available at www.anco-online.org. ANCO urges members to submit other payor ESA coverage policies for review and comment.

EDUCATION

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

ASCO's 2008 Genitourinary Cancers Symposium

ASCO's 2008 Genitourinary Cancers Symposium: A Multidisciplinary Approach will take place at the *San Francisco Marriott*, February 14-16th, 2008. The meeting is being hosted by ASCO in collaboration with the *American Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology* and the *Society of Urologic Oncology*. Visit www.asco.org/meetings for more information.

Additional Education Meetings

Other meetings of possible interest to ANCO member practices are:

October 3rd

Moving Forward: Breast Cancer Survivorship
CancerCare

Telephone Education Workshop

October 3rd-4th

Perspectives in Melanoma XI

Imedex

Huntington Beach

October 3rd-6th

24th National Oncology Economics Conference: Cancer Care—The Next Frontier

Association of Community Cancer Centers

Dallas

October 7-9th

Fall Conference

California Hospice Foundation

San Diego

October 10th

Sailing into the Unknown: Contending with Loss

Northern California Cancer Center

San Francisco

October 19th

The Importance of Taking Your Pills Everyday
CancerCare

Telephone Education Workshop

October 20th

Latino Survivorship Conference

Northern California Cancer Center

Hayward

October 25th

Follicular Lymphoma: New Treatments on the Horizon

CancerCare

Telephone Education Workshop

October 26th

Caring for Your Bones When You Have Breast Cancer

CancerCare

Telephone Education Workshop

October 27th-November 1st

SRAO Annual Conference

Society for Radiation Oncology Administrators
Los Angeles

October 30th

Understanding Peripheral Neuropathy
CancerCare

Telephone Education Workshop

November 7th

Living Each Day With Lung Cancer
CancerCare

Telephone Education Workshop

November 9th

Caregivers of Women Living with Metastatic Breast Cancer

CancerCare

Telephone Education Workshop

November 14th

For Caregivers: Coping with a Loved One's Cancer During the Holidays

CancerCare

Telephone Education Workshop

December 8th

What Now? Living with the "New Normal" Cancer Survivorship Conference

Northern California Cancer Center
San Francisco

December 8-11th

49th Annual ASH Annual Meeting & Exposition
American Society of Hematology

Atlanta

December 19th

The Latest Developments Reported at the 30th Annual San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium

CancerCare

Telephone Education Workshop

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

MEMBERSHIP RESOURCES & BENEFITS

[Editor's Note: All ANCO members are also eligible for several tangible 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 Medicare resources).
- clinical and professional education meeting announcements and distributed materials.
- survey reports, publications, and ListServ, and WebLog.
- clinical trials information.
- links to affiliated organizations.
- updated physician, nurse, manager, and patient resources.

ANCO On-Line ListServ & WebLog

The ANCO *Online ListServ* is available to all ANCO physician members, nurses, practice managers, and Corporate Member representatives. It is a source for the latest ANCO news and other information impacting hematology/oncology practices. These postings are digested in the ANCO *Online WebLog* at www.anco-online.org/news/index.html (see below). It is also a way for ANCO members to communicate amongst themselves. To post an item to the ANCO *Online ListServ*, send e-mail to anco@anco-online.org. (Please note: Only subscribers to the ANCO *Online ListServ* may post items and the ANCO *Executive Director* will review all postings for appropriate content. In addition, to communicate directly and privately with the ANCO *Executive Director*, send e-mail to execdir@anco-online.org.) All ANCO physician members and their staffs are encouraged to subscribe, participate, and use the ANCO *Online ListServ* to receive ANCO information electronically and to communicate with colleagues about issues of importance to hematology/oncology practice. To subscribe, send your e-mail address to the ANCO office at execdir@anco-online.org.

Benefits

ANCO continues to seek ways to make membership more beneficial. The *Board* identifies, reviews, and approves of additional membership benefits. In addition to the benefits derived from its advocacy, educational, and

information dissemination activities, ANCO members may also benefit from several tangible benefits 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)*, *McKesson Specialty Oncology Services* (formerly *National Oncology Alliance* or *NOA*), and *OTN/Onmark*. Contact your local ION/OS (Doug Storer at (650) 219-9282 or douglas.storer@iononline.com; or Paul Sullivan at (602) 391-9166 or paul.sullivan@iononline.com), McKesson/NOA (Scot Wagner at (866) 466-2462 or swagner@noainc.com; or Patrick Walsh at (415) 793-8736 or patrick.walsh@mckesson.com), or OTN/Onmark (Jennifer Semanik at (415) 497-2750 or Tony Policani at (509) 995-0280 or anthony.policani@otnnet.com; or Monique Weston at (650) 871-2108 or monique.weston@onmarkservices.com) for more information.
- **IntrinsiQ's IntelliDose Discount Program** makes *IntelliDose*, a clinical oncology software solution, available to ANCO members at a reduced price. Contact Louis Diodoro at *IntrinsiQ* directly at (800) 565-2279, x504 or louis.diodoro@intrinsiq.com for more information about *IntrinsiQ Research* and *IntelliDose* or visit www.intrinsiq.com.
- **Oncology Pharmaceutical Services (OPS)**, a division of *US Oncology*. Contact Sean Taylor at (415) 235-4673 or sean.taylor@usoncology.com for more information.

ANCO and *McKesson Specialty Oncology Services* have agreed to make *OncoEMR*, an oncology-specific Web-based electronic medical record, available to ANCO members at a **significant discount**. For more information about *OncoEMR*, please contact your McKesson/NOA representative.

OTN has entered into an exclusive agreement with *Altos Solutions* that adds electronic medical record (EMR) functionality to OTN's current integrated Lynx technology platform. Lynx EMR provides broad oncology-specific electronic medical record capabilities and integrates directly with Lynx' existing automated charge capture, inventory management and practice management tools.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Annual Election

Four seats on the ANCO *Board of Directors* are up for election in 2007. 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 2008-2010, 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 16th.

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 13th. Please call José Luis González, *ANCO Executive Director*, at (415) 472-3960 if you wish to participate in a future meeting.

Individual Member News

California Cancer Care, an ANCO member practice, has been very involved in designing the *Cancer Center Business Summit* (October 25-26th; *The Fairmont Chicago*), an educational meeting for those interested in the future of academic and community cancer centers. The *Cancer Center Business Summit* is a professional forum for exploring today's imperatives for success in the delivery of cancer care: clinical integration, business diversification, and practice consolidation. The *Summit* brings together the

financial and business community with the stakeholders in the delivery of cancer care to provide diversity of viewpoint on the future business models for cancer care and how that future vision can be achieved. For more information and to register, visit www.foley.com/cancersummit.

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 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

Stanford's *GI Cancers* takes place at the *Mauna Lani Bay Resort* on the Kohala Coast, Hawaii, on October 18-20th. This three-day national conference will bring together leading experts in the fields of gastroenterology and radiation oncology to highlight advances in the diagnosis and treatment of advanced gastrointestinal cancers. Visit www.cme.stanfordhospital.com for more information.

UCD's *8th Annual Advances in Oncology* takes place at the *Hyatt Regency* in Sacramento on October 20th. Visit ucdcrucdmc.ucdavis.edu/servlet/CmeSignIn?ccode=ONCOL08 to register.

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. For more information, please call (415) 357-1278 or visit www.abaftc.org.

UCSF's Donald Abrams, M.D., is the *Program Co-Chair* for the *Society of Integrative Oncology's 4th International Conference: Expanding Horizons in Collaborative Cancer Care* taking place November 15-17th at the *Renaissance Parc*

55 Hotel in San Francisco. For additional information and to register, visit www.integrativeonc.org

The *9th Annual UCSF/UCD Thoracic Oncology Conference* takes place in San Francisco on November 17th. Visit www.cme.ucsf.edu/cme/CourseDetail.aspx?coursenumber=MSU07004 for more information.

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:

*AMGEN • Abraxis Oncology
Alexion Pharmaceuticals • AstraZeneca
Bayer Healthcare Pharmaceuticals
biogenIDEC
Bristol-Myers Squibb Oncology
Cephalon Oncology • Celgene
Clariant Diagnostics • Eisai
Enzon Pharmaceuticals
Genentech BioOncology
Genitope Corporation • Genomic Health
Genzyme Oncology
International Oncology Network
Lash Group Healthcare Consultants
Lilly Oncology
McKesson Specialty Oncology Services
MedImmune Oncology • MGI Pharma
Millennium • Novartis Oncology
Oncology Pharmaceutical Services
Oncology Supply • Onmark
Ortho Biotech • OSI Pharmaceuticals • OTN
Pfizer Oncology • Pharmion
Roche Oncology • Sanofi Aventis Oncology
Schering-Plough Oncology*

We especially wish to thank and welcome *Alexion Pharmaceuticals, Celgene, Eisai, and Genzyme Oncology* as new Corporate Members in 2007. We regret to announce that *GlaxoSmithKline, Matrix Oncology, and SuperGen* are no longer Corporate Members of ANCO.

Alexion Pharmaceuticals presents *The Evolution of PNH: Diagnosis to Current Therapeutic*

Options with Ted Wun, M.D., *UC Davis*, on Tuesday, October 2nd at the *Hyatt Regency Sacramento*. To register for this meeting please e-mail Christine Kostanecki at kostaneckic@alxn.com.

AMGEN informs ANCO that Medicare will require that new ICD-9 codes be used for patients with anemia of cancer chemotherapy (deleted code 284.8 replaced with new code 284.89, other specified aplastic anemias) for dates of service on or after October 1st. Please note that there are a significant number of diagnosis coding changes. The coding changes are available at www.cms.hhs.gov/ICD9ProviderDiagnosticCodes/Downloads/new_diagnosis_codes_2007.pdf. In addition, **AMGEN has published a series of documents to assist practices adapt to the new CMS ESA NCD.** These documents are entitled:

- Prescribing information (PI) for darbepoetin alfa and NCD 000383 ESAs in cancer and neoplastic conditions
- NCD for ESAs
- ESA dosing considerations under the NCD for Medicare patients
- Darbepoetin alfa weight-based dosing per the NCD for Medicare patients

For additional information, contact your *AMGEN* representative or by call Reimbursement Connection at (800) 272-9376 (www.reimbursementconnection.com).

Bayer HealthCare Pharmaceuticals and Genzyme inform ANCO that the *United States Food and Drug Administration* has approved Campath for the single-agent treatment of B-cell chronic lymphocytic leukemia (B-CLL). Campath was initially approved in 2001.

Lilly Oncology informs ANCO that the *United States Food and Drug Administration* has approved Evista to reduce risks of invasive breast cancer in certain women. Evista may now be used in postmenopausal women who have osteoporosis or are predisposed to developing the cancer.

Clinical Trial News

ASCO's *Clinical Trials Workshop* takes place

October 26-28th at the *Grand Hyatt* in Denver, Colorado. Clinical trials are crucial for developing better methods of preventing, detecting, and treating cancer. ASCO's *Clinical Trials Workshop* helps oncologists, nurses, and other members of the research team evaluate, integrate, and conduct clinical trials in the community practice setting. This CME-certified workshop provides practical tools not currently offered in fellowship training programs or most continuing education materials. The program focuses on four themes:

- Role of the oncology team
- Clinical trials procedures
- Selection of trials
- Communicating with patients about clinical trials

Attendance is limited to enhance audience participation. For more information, visit www.asco.org/ctw.

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.

ANCO members can search information about Institutional Member's clinical trials at www.anco-online.org/trials.html. A current list of UCD's active adult protocols is available at ccresources.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/csr/content/clinicaltrialspublicreport.csr?adult=1.

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 brain, 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.

The *Patient Advocate Foundation's (PAF) Colorectal CareLine (CCL)* is a national toll free telephone hotline designed to offer assistance to all colorectal cancer patients and healthcare providers seeking educational resources, direct assistance with access to care issues, and/or financial aid for select patient needs, including lodging, transportation, childcare and other expenses associated with out-of-town treatment. The hotline can be accessed at (866) 657-8634 or patients may visit www.colorectalcareline.org.

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.

Publications, Services, & Surveys

ASCO is expanding its tools to improve documentation and coordination of cancer treatment and survivorship care by developing a chemotherapy treatment plan and summary template for breast cancer patients. The goal of the breast cancer treatment plan and summary (available at www.asco.org/treatmentsummary) is to improve communication among oncologists, patients, and other care providers to better manage breast cancer patients' treatment across health care settings. It will also make gathering data to evaluate and improve quality of care and patient outcomes more accurate and efficient. The new breast cancer treatment plan and summary template joins a colorectal treatment template published online earlier this year. ASCO is continuing to develop and test treatment plans and summaries for additional cancer diagnoses, including lung cancer.

The September (Vol. 3, Issue 5) issue of ASCO's *Journal of Oncology Practice* features articles on ESAs, RACs, and QOPI. Visit www.jopasco.org to view these articles.

ANCO is conducting its biennial *Practice Staff Salary Survey* in 3Q07. Survey packets were mailed to each ANCO member practice in early June. Data collected will be compared with that collected in 2005 and earlier. Please be sure to complete and return the ANCO *Practice Staff Salary Survey* as soon as possible. You may request a duplicate *Practice Staff Salary Survey* instrument from the ANCO office at (415) 472-3960 if you did not receive or misplaced the first copy.

ANCO recently distributed a brief ANCO **Member Experience with the Medicare RAC** survey. If you did not received the survey, then please download one from www.anco-online.org. ANCO will share the results of the survey with the *California Medical Association* and *American Medical Association* that are working with CMS to improve the RAC process.