

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 FAXed to Individual Member practices, and e-mailed to Group, Institutional, and Corporate (contacts) Members. The next *ANCO FAX News* will be published on May 23rd. Send your comments or contributions to 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.]

The Senate Finance Committee is currently developing legislation that would stop the 15% Medicare physician payment cuts scheduled over the next two years, and instead extend the current .5% increase through the end of 2008 and a give doctors a 1.1% pay raise in 2009. Senate leaders hope to vote on the package as

**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.

early as mid-May.

CMS has issued revised instructions on the acceptable uses of ESAs. Read the updated instructions at www.cms.hhs.gov/MLN MattersArticles/downloads/MM5818.pdf. ASCO's revised **instruction sheet on reporting hematocrit/hemoglobin in conjunction with claims for ESAs** and other anti-anemia drugs is now available at www.anco-online.org/ASCO_ESA_Reporting_2008.pdf

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 may earn a lump sum bonus payment. CMS recently announced new reporting options and incentive payments for physicians participating in the PQRI. For complete information on PQRI, including teleconference materials, user guides, tool kits for successful reporting, beneficiary letters, and FAQs, visit www.cms.hhs.gov/PQRI. The *American Medical Association* (AMA) has posted PQRI worksheets for the 2008 PQRI program at its website (www.ama-assn.org). In addition, **ASCO has updated its PQRI website (www.asco.org/pqri) to include relevant links and a table of oncology-related measures.**

Electronic health records (EHR) are an important vehicle for advancing quality cancer care. To help oncology practices select, purchase, and implement an EHR, ASCO has developed a new handbook, *The Oncology Electronic Health Record Field Guide: Selecting and Implementing an EHR*. Several organizations have developed guidance for their members who are interested in purchasing and using an EHR. However, this field guide is the only oncology-specific consumer manual designed to guide oncology practices in selecting current and future oncology-specific EHRs for clinical practice management and quality-of-care measurement and improvement. The chapters in the *Field Guide* address the core functionalities desired in an oncology-specific EHR, including:

- Identifying an EHR project team
- Selecting an EHR

- Building a budget
- Using the EHR to support quality of care and patient safety
- Post-implementation management

The *Field Guide* is available in hard copy as well as PDF. Electronic users can print worksheets and forms as they go through the *Field Guide's* material. Both formats of the *Field Guide* can be purchased by e-mailing support@articleworks.com or calling (800) 804-1425. More information is available at www.asco.org/ehrfieldduide. In addition, **ASCO is sponsoring its 2nd EHR Lab at the 2008 Annual Meeting in Chicago.** Attendees will have an opportunity to learn about EHR technologies appropriate for their practices and gain hands-on experience with the latest EHRs. Vendors will demonstrate the capacity of their products to provide clinical decision support and experts will be onsite to answer questions attendees may have about the adoption and use of EHR technology. The EHR Lab, located in McCormick Place, East Building, Room E253, will be open Friday, May 30th, 1-6PM, Saturday, May 31st, 9AM-5PM, and Sunday, June 1st, 9AM-5PM.

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 2008 PowerPoint* presentation. (Also visit www.asco.org/janaudiocall for additional materials and a downloadable recording of the presentation.)
- The April 2008 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.]

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

- Earlier this year, the *Legislature* passed emergency cuts to the MediCal program totaling more than \$1B, including a 10% provider rate cut. This week, the CMA filed a class action lawsuit against the state in Los Angeles Superior Court seeking an immediate injunction to block the reduction in MediCal payments. ANCO is supporting CMA's efforts through a financial contribution to their legal fund. When it comes to MediCal payments the lawsuit charges that "state law requires that MediCal fee-for-service rates be adopted pursuant to the regulatory process and requires the state to annually review MediCal rates, taking into account *Consumer Price Index* cost increases, reimbursement levels under Medicare, and other third-party payors, prevailing customary charges, and other factors." The lawsuit points out that no such regulatory process occurred before the rate reductions for physicians and other providers were approved. A Court hearing on the request for an injunction is expected within the next thirty to forty-five days.

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

CMA and the *Alliance for Patient Care* (APC) oppose the 10% cut to MediCal provider rates, scheduled to take effect July 1st. CMA/APC needs your help to educate the public and elected officials about the harmful impacts this cut will have on access to health care in your area. If your practice and patients will be impacted by these cuts, then please take a few moments to fill out a brief questionnaire at www.allianceforpatientcare.org/tell_us.htm. Your stories will be a key part of CMA/APC's efforts to humanize the impact of these cuts, a critical component of their campaign. You do not have to see MediCal patients for your patients to be impacted by these cuts or for your story to be helpful. But, if you do see MediCal patients, and particularly if you plan on reducing your MediCal practice due to these cuts, CMA/APC needs to hear from you!

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 CMA 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.

NHIC/Medicare, Palmetto/J1MAC, MediCal, & Private Payors

[Editor's Note: ANCO communicates regularly with *National Heritage Insurance Company* (NHIC) that administers Medicare in California, Palmetto that will administer the J1MAC in California, and the *Department of Health Care Services* (DHCS) that administers MediCal in California.]

Palmetto/J1MAC will host a series of Medicare Part B transition teleconference calls for Part B providers in Hawaii, Nevada, California, Guam, American Samoa and the Northern Mariana Islands. These one-hour sessions will provide you with the most recent transition information and

will address the questions you have about the implementation. This is your opportunity to speak with Palmetto/J1MAC and to discuss the implementation topic of your choice. The teleconferences are similar to the "Ask-the-Contractor Teleconferences" (ACT) offered by the Medicare fee-for-service contractors but will be focused on J1MAC transition issues. For more information, visit www.palmettogba.com/palmetto/j1.nsf/DocsCat/Home and review the Events section.

Palmetto/J1MAC sent a letter to all California Medicare providers on April 1st requesting a new completed *Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) agreement* (i.e., CMS-588). The contact telephone number listed in the original letter is incorrect and should be (866) 749-4301. The link to the CMS-588 form is www.cms.hhs.gov/cmsforms/downloads/CMS588.pdf. Complete the EFT agreement with your current banking information and forward along with a copy of a voided check to the following address:

Palmetto GBA Finance
J1 EFT
Post Office Box 100277
Columbia, SC 29202-3277

Due to the volume of EFTs being processed, submit your EFT agreement as soon as possible and no later than August 1st. Failure to submit the form by the deadline date will revert payment to hard copy checks beginning with the first cycle after conversion. Please contact Palmetto/J1MAC at EFT.Admin@PalmettoGBA.com or (866) 749-4301 should you have any questions or need assistance and identify yourself as a new J1 provider to expedite your call. Alternatively, visit www.palmettogba.com/palmetto/j1.nsf/DocsCat/Home and follow the EDI links. There you will find updated Application Forms, Frequently Asked Questions (and Answers), Hot Topics, and information about Support Center hours of operation.

CMS has implemented the use of the revised *Advance Beneficiary Notice of Noncoverage (ABN)* and is allowing a six-month transition period from the date of implementation (March 1st) for use of the revised form and instructions. All providers and suppliers must begin using the

new ABN no later than September 1st. The new form replaces both the CMS-R-131G and the CMS-R-131L. Unlike the old ABN this revised form may also be used for voluntary notifications of noncoverage in place of the CMS 20007, *Notice of Exclusions from Medicare Benefits (NEMB)*. You can access the new form and form instructions online at www.cms.hhs.gov/bni. The physician or supplier must issue notices each time that they make the assessment that Medicare payment probably or certainly will not be made. Such notice (ABN) must be given to the beneficiary prior to rendering services. It should be discussed with the beneficiary and/or their representative and any questions answered before it is signed. This allows the beneficiary to make an informed consumer decision, without undue pressure, on whether or not to receive the item or services for which he or she may have to pay out of pocket or through other insurance. The ABN form must clearly identify the particular item or service, it must state that the physician or supplier believes Medicare is likely (or certain) to deny payment for the particular item or service, and must give the physician or supplier reason(s) for their belief that Medicare will deny payment. The ABN must be prepared with an original and at least one copy. Providers should retain the original and give a copy to the beneficiary. Legible duplicates (carbons), FAX copies, electronically scanned copies or photocopies will suffice.

Medicare fee-for-service claims must include an NPI in the primary provider fields on the claim (i.e., the billing, pay-to provider, and rendering provider fields). You may continue to submit NPI/legacy pairs in these fields or submit only your NPI. The secondary provider fields (i.e., referring, ordering and supervising) may continue to include only your legacy number, if you choose. Failure to submit an NPI in the primary provider fields will result in your claim being rejected. In addition, if you already bill using the NPI/legacy pair and your claims are processing correctly, now is a good time to submit to your contractor a small number of claims containing only the NPI. This test will serve to assure your claims will successfully process when only the NPI is mandated on all claims. **Effective May 23rd, claims must be submitting using NPI only**

in all provider fields on the claim. Legacy numbers may not be used.

The *Medicare B Resource* (March 2008) is available online at www.medicarenhic.com/news/provider_news/mbr_mar08.pdf. Visit www.medicarenhic.com/cal_prov/updates.shtml to learn the latest information (updated weekly) from NHIC/Medicare or www.palmettogba.com/palmetto/j1.nsf/DocsCat/Home to learn the latest information from Palmetto/J1MAC. Updates are also posted on ANCO's *Online Weblog* (via www.anco-online.org).

EDUCATION

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

ASCO Annual Meeting

ASCO members can register for the *2008 Annual Meeting* at www.asco.org/annualmeeting. Browse the complete *Annual Meeting* program at www.asco.org/AMprogram. Finally, ASCO members can now access the complete content of the *2008 ASCO Educational Book* at www.asco.org/edbook. The online edition contains 91 original articles by speakers and chairs of sessions to be held at the *2008 Annual Meeting* and is fully searchable by title, category, keyword, and author name. Although summaries of each manuscript are accessible to all users, only ASCO members are able to read the full-text manuscripts. Members and pre-registered *Annual Meeting* attendees will receive copies of the *2008 ASCO Educational Book* on CD-ROM by mail beginning in early May; attendees will receive print copies in their tote bags upon their arrival at the *Annual Meeting*.

2008 Best of ASCO Meetings

Oncology professionals who are unable to attend ASCO's *2008 Annual Meeting* as well as attendees who wish to review the cutting-edge science presented at the *Annual Meeting* can now register for the upcoming *Best of ASCO Meetings*. The *Best of ASCO Meetings* condense highlights from the *ASCO Annual Meeting* into a two-day program presented in two locations—Boston and

Los Angeles. These summary meetings will feature high-impact abstracts presented at ASCO's *2008 Annual Meeting* that represent the most relevant scientific findings in primary disease sites and practice changing advances in cancer prevention and treatment. For the first time, the *Best of ASCO Meeting* in Los Angeles will be held in conjunction with the *World Conference on Interventional Oncology's (WCIO) Annual Meeting*. Attendees will have the opportunity to examine advances in scientific and translational cancer research, evaluate the role of new diagnostic techniques and therapeutic approaches, and gain the knowledge to implement new disease management and patient care strategies and to revise existing ones. Research in the fields of breast cancer, developmental therapeutics, gastrointestinal cancer (colorectal and noncolorectal), genitourinary cancer, gynecologic cancer, head and neck cancer, leukemia, lung cancer, lymphoma, melanoma, and patient care will be presented. The *2008 Best of ASCO Meetings* will be held on June 22nd-25th, *Hyatt Regency Century Plaza*, Los Angeles, and June 27-28th, *Renaissance Boston Waterfront Hotel*. Visit www.asco.org/boa to register and to obtain more information about the *Best of ASCO Meetings*. Please note that **ANCO will organize its ASCO Highlights in 2008 featuring local faculty on September 6th in Oakland.**

ACCC's 25th National Oncology Economics Conference

Mark your calendar for the *Association of Community Cancer Center's 25th National Oncology Economics Conference*, September 17-20th, San Francisco. Are you prepared to weather the storm? Increased competition, reduced reimbursement, and rising demand require a solid plan. Learn how to protect and strengthen your cancer program. Watch this space for details or visit www.accc-cancer.org/mainevent.

4th Annual Oncology Congress

The *4th Annual Oncology Congress* takes place September 25-28th at the *Hilton San Francisco*. All content is programmed by a multidisciplinary board of 20 advisors and speakers are the thought leaders in their fields. The *Oncology Congress*

engages you in productive peer-to-peer discussions about cancer prevention, diagnosis, and treatment options, giving you the practical knowledge, tools, and insight needed to improve care and quality of life for your patients today. ANCO has negotiated discounts for members. The first 50 ANCO members to register attend for free; all others pay a discounted rate of \$395 for physicians or \$195 for nurses and physician assistants. Register at www.oncologycongress.com/anco and use priority code ANCO.

Additional Education Meetings

Other meetings of possible interest to ANCO member practices are:

May 13th & June 24th

The Sixth Annual Cancer Survivorship Series: Living With, Through and Beyond Cancer
CancerCare

Telephone Education Workshop

May 16th

Medical Update on Metastatic Prostate Cancer
CancerCare

Telephone Education Workshop

May 21st

Tools for Improving the Chemotherapy Experience
CancerCare

Telephone Education Workshop

June 4th

Medical Update on Triple Negative Breast Cancer
CancerCare

Telephone Education Workshop

June 5-6th

Achieving Efficient Practice Operations
Medical Group Management Association
Reno

June 7-8th

Negotiation Skills for Medical Practice Management
Medical Group Management Association
Reno

June 12-15th

Food as Medicine Professional Nutritional Training Conference
Center for Mind-Body Medicine
Baltimore

June 19th

Medical Update on Ovarian Cancer from the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Annual Meeting

CancerCare

Telephone Education Workshop

June 25th

Medical Update on Head and Neck Cancer from the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Annual Meeting

CancerCare

Telephone Education Workshop

June 25-26th

9th Annual Patient Congress
Patient Advocate Foundation
Washington DC

July 18-20th

Advances in Long-Term Management of Adult Patients Undergoing Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation

Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
San Francisco

July 19th-23rd

7th International Conference on Head and Neck Cancer

American Head & Neck Society
San Francisco

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 website, 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 anco-online.blogspot.com (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.

The ANCO *Online Weblog* posts and archives important news for hematology/oncology practices on an almost daily basis. Among the additional news topics covered at anco-online.blogspot.com are:

- ACCC Alerts
- ANCO Meeting Announcements
- ASCO e-News and Cancer Policy Today
- ASH Practice Updates
- CMA Alerts
- CMS/Medicare Website Updates
- NHIC/Medicare Website Updates

ANCO urges its members to bookmark anco-online.blogspot.com (or subscribe to anco-online.blogspot.com/feeds/posts/default using your favorite news reader software; e.g., RssReader for Windows or NetNewsWire for Macintosh) and refer to it often.

Benefits

As a follow-up to the recent professional education meetings entitled *Managing in Whitewater Times*, ANCO has negotiated an exclusive membership offer (including free practice assessment, aggressive discounts on pricing, and potential access to ANCO member-specific benchmarking data) for *RemitDATA's* powerful suite of web-based, plug-n-work productivity tools that help providers become more profitable. *Reimbursement Pro* helps managers and collectors better control their reimbursement process including the identification of payer problems, identification and appeals of denials, submission of secondary claims, and finding and copying paper EOBs and other common money pits. Contact Matthew Trogden at (972) 249-8661 or mtrogdon@remidata.com for more information.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

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 June 17th. 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 2007 was published and mailed to ANCO physician members; nurse and office manager contacts; and, Corporate Member representatives at the end of June 2007. 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 2008.

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

**ALPHABETICAL DIRECTORY
OF NURSE & OFFICE MANAGER
CONTACTS**

Elizabeth Kemp

Monterey Bay Oncology
5 Harris Court, Building T, 2nd Floor
Monterey, CA 93940
Telephone: (831) 375-4105
FAX: (831) 372-5722
ekemp@mbogc.com

Group Member News

ANCO has initiated a **Group Membership** in 2008 based on a mutual set of perceived values and benefits and a mutual set of interests. The ANCO *Board* believes that the *Association* and *Kaiser Permanente Medical Group* (KPMG) will each receive value from Group Membership. ANCO thanks *Kaiser Permanente Medical Group* for joining ANCO. A complete roster of KPMG physicians that are now ANCO members is available at www.anco-online.org/pubs.html (under *ANCO FAX News*, Vol. 7, No. 5).

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

UCSF's **Radiation Oncology Post Graduate Course 2008** takes place at the *St. Regis Hotel* in San Francisco on May 23rd-24th. Visit www.cme.ucsf.edu/cme/CourseDetail.aspx?coursenumber=MMC08016 for more information.

The **10th Annual UCSF/UCD Thoracic Oncology Conference** takes place in San Francisco on November 8th. Visit www.cme.ucsf.edu/cme/CourseDetail.aspx?coursenumber=MSU09004 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:

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

We especially wish to thank and welcome *ImClone Systems* and *Wyeth BioPharma* as new Corporate Members in 2008.

***AstraZeneca's Cancer Support Network* will host**

a webcast on May 15th at 12PM entitled ***Reimbursement for Today's Oncology Practice with Gordon Hedrick***. The webcast will address Medicare contracting reform and recent changes to Federal law that have affected best price considerations for Medicare. Contact AZLogistics@xcenda.com or (866) 216-5291 to register for this webcast.

Clinical Trial News

UC San Francisco's Neil Shah, M.D., is running a study using XL019, a potent, ATP-competitive and reversible inhibitor of JAK2. This is a first in human study aimed at patients with myeloproliferative disorders. These patients have a dominant gain-of-function mutation in the JAK2 gene that the drug targets. Eligible patients will have one of the following diagnoses: primary myelofibrosis (MF), post-polycythemia vera MF, or post-essential thrombocythemia MF who require therapy. Patients can be newly diagnosed intermediate or high risk, or have relapsed or refractory disease. The drug is taken orally, once per day, for 21 out of 28 days. UC San Francisco has recently been activated for an amended phase I protocol that is investigating lower doses than initially tested when the original study opened. The reason is that while activity was observed, neuropathy was noted in some patients. This study is thus looking at lower doses and alternate treatment schedules, and there will be careful neurologic follow-up. UC San Francisco is the first of the four sites to be open, and can accrue up to 12 patients, so they would like to accommodate as many interested patients as possible. If you have a potentially eligible patient, please contact Dr. Shah's research coordinator at (415) 502-1564.

Patient News

ASCO's ***People Living With Cancer (PLWC)*** is now Cancer.Net.

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 has expanded its tools to improve documentation and coordination of cancer treatment and survivorship care by developing a “generic” chemotherapy treatment plan and summary template that can be customized for almost any cancer diagnosis. Developing a generic template was an important step for community practices that see patients with a variety of diagnoses. The new generic cancer treatment plan and summary template joins breast and colorectal cancer treatment templates, which have been available online at www.asco.org/treatmentsummary since 2007. All ASCO treatment plan and summary templates are published in modifiable forms, allowing oncologists to customize and adapt them to suit their own practices. The treatment plan and summary are not intended to replace detailed chart documentation, including complete patient histories or chemotherapy flow sheets. No single treatment plan can be appropriate for all patients; treating oncologists assume responsibility for tailoring the treatment summary to meet individual patient’s needs.

You may already be familiar with ASCO’s *Clinical Practice Guidelines*, but did you know they are accompanied by easy-to-use clinical tools? These tools include slide sets, and summaries of the guidelines, and may also include patient chart tools, such as flow sheets. In the midst of a busy practice, these tools enable oncologists to use the latest guidelines on emerging issues in clinical oncology. All of these tools are free of charge and available online through www.asco.org/guidelines.

The National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) recently announced several new updates to the NCCN *Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology for Non-Hodgkin’s Lymphoma* (NHL). The NHL *Guidelines* now include bendamustine (Treanda, Cephalon) as a treatment option for chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL). Specifically, bendamustine is

included as a single agent for first-line therapy. For second-line therapy, it can be used as a single agent or in combination with rituximab (Rituxan, Genentech). Bendamustine was recently approved by the FDA for the treatment of patients with CLL based on the results of a pivotal phase III study, which showed that bendamustine was more effective than chlorambucil in patients with untreated CLL. For more information, visit www.nccn.org/professionals/physician_gls/PDF/nhl.pdf.

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 practice performance improvement requirement for ABIM *Maintenance of Certification*. Register for QOPI at www.asco.org/QOPI.

Membership Dues for 2008

Final notices of membership renewal were mailed on April 16th. If you have not yet done so, then please return your 2008 membership dues to ANCO now to ensure your inclusion in *The ANCO Directory of Members 2008*. Be sure to provide ANCO with the name(s) of office and/or nurse manager contact(s). Those not renewing their membership by June 1st will be deleted from the *Directory of Members*, and will no longer be eligible for any ANCO benefits. Contact the ANCO office if you did not receive or misplaced your membership dues renewal notice.

ANCO seeks new members. **All members of a practice should join ANCO.** Provide the ANCO office with the names and addresses of colleagues you would like invited to join ANCO.

A larger ANCO is a stronger ANCO!