

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 FAXed to Individual Member practices, and e-mailed to Group, Institutional, and Corporate (contacts) Members. The next *ANCO FAX News* will be published on August 1st. 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 President vetoed the Medicare Improvement Act for Patients and Providers (HR6331) on July 15th. The House of Representatives and Senate both voted swiftly to override the veto by larger margins than it originally passed by. HR6331 provides for a 0.5% increase for the remainder of 2008 (retroactive to July 1st) and a 1.1%

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.

increase for 2009. According to CMS, providers paid under the *Medicare Physician Fee Schedule* (MPFS) should begin to receive payment at the 0.5% updated rates in approximately 10 business days, or less. Medicare contractors are currently working to update their payment system with the new rates. In the meantime, to avoid a disruption to the payment of claims for providers paid under the MPFS, Medicare contractors will continue to process the claims that have been on hold on a rolling basis (first in/first out) for payment at the -10.6% update level. After your local contractor begins to pay claims at the 0.5% updated rate, to the extent possible, the contractor will begin to automatically reprocess any claims paid at the lower rates. Under the Medicare statute, Medicare pays the lower of submitted charges or the Medicare fee schedule amount. Claims with dates of service July 1st and later billed with a submitted charge at least at the level of the January 1st-30th, fee schedule amount will be automatically reprocessed. Any lesser amount will require providers to contact their local contractor for direction on obtaining adjustments. Non-participating physicians who submitted unassigned claims at the reduced nonparticipation amount also will need to request an adjustment.

CMS recently made two announcements with regard to the *Competitive Acquisition Program* (CAP) for drugs. First, the post-payment review process for the CAP is conducted to verify drug administration for Medicare claims submitted by an approved CAP vendor. For this process, a small sample of physician and vendor claims and other documentation is examined in order to establish that drugs billed by an approved CAP vendor were administered and were medically necessary. To support this review, participating CAP physicians may receive a request for copies of medical records from the CAP designated carrier, *Noridian Administrative Services* (NAS). Medicare requirements and the CAP terms of agreement require participating CAP physicians to submit all information necessary to support the services billed on claims. Participating CAP physicians must submit medical records to NAS within the requested timeframe. This submission should include the patient's drug administration record and all other records supporting medical

necessity for the drug. If CAP post payment review activity cannot establish that a drug was administered, then the vendor's drug claim will be denied. The associated physician drug administration claim will also be referred to the physician's local carrier for review and recoupment as necessary. For additional information on the post payment review process, please visit NAS's website at www.noridianmedicare.com/cap_drug/index.html. Second, the list of drugs available under the CAP has been updated and is now available in the *Downloads* section on the CMS *CAP Information for Physicians* page at www.cms.hhs.gov/CompetitiveAcquisforBios/02_infophys.asp. Vectibix (panitumumab, J9303) has been added to the CAP effective July 1st and the list of NDCs available under the CAP has also been updated.

CMS has completed its review of available and recognized sources to help determine coverage for anti-cancer chemotherapy drugs. The acceptable compendia are:

- The *American Hospital Formulary Service Drug Information* (AHFS-DI; for Parts B, D, and Medicaid)
- *National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) Drugs & Biologics Compendium* (for Part B)
- Thomson Micromedex *DrugDex* (for Parts B, D, and Medicaid)
- Elsevier Gold Standard's *Clinical Pharmacology* (for Part B)

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 (see www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNMMattersArticles/downloads/MM6104.pdf). For complete information on PQRI, including teleconference materials, quick reference charts, user guides, tool kits for successful reporting, updated submission methodologies, beneficiary letters, fact sheets, 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.

CMS has announced that 2007 PQRI *Final Feedback Reports* are now available to each practice, identified by *Taxpayer Identification Number* (TIN), under which at least one eligible professional reported 2007 PQRI quality measures data. *Reports* include information on reporting rates, clinical performance, and incentives earned by individual professionals, with summary information on reporting success and incentives earned at the practice (TIN) level. For more information about the *Reports* and how to register to receive them, visit www.cms.hhs.gov/MLN MattersArticles/downloads/SE0747.pdf and www.cms.hhs.gov/MLN MattersArticles/downloads/SE0753.pdf.

On June 30th, CMS issued the 2009 *Medicare Physician Fee Schedule* (MPFS) proposed rule. CMS will accept comments on all elements of the proposed rule until August 29th, and will respond to those comments in a final rule to be issued by November 1st. ASCO has published a summary of the provisions that are of relevance to oncologists. ASCO's detailed summary is available at www.anco-online.org/mma/ASCOMPFS2009.pdf. According to ASCO, the key elements in the proposed rule impacting oncology are:

- CMS's acceptance of the *American Medical Association's* (AMA) *Relative Value Update Committee* (RUC) recommendations to revise practice expense values for CPT codes 96440, 96445, 96450, and 96542.
- CMS's decision not to make any changes to the payment localities for California.
- CMS's decision to review the estimated prices of high-cost supplies, procedures that are performed together, and establish priorities for RUC review.
- CMS's decision to discontinue the special payment for IVIG.

- CMS's update of ASP affecting the calculation of weighted average ASP for multiple source drugs.
- CMS's proposal to refine regulations in the CAP for drugs.
- CMS's proposal to require physicians that furnish diagnostic services to enroll in Medicare as an independent diagnostic testing facility (IDTF) and comply with most of the IDTF standards by September 30th, 2009.
- CMS's proposal of two alternative approaches to deal with the issue of possible overutilization of services resulting from certain arrangements (i.e., the anti-markup provision would apply to services performed or supervised by a physician who does not share a practice with the billing physician, and continuing the site-related approach).
- CMS's proposal of a new exemption under the Stark law that would permit incentive and shared savings arrangements between physicians and hospitals.
- CMS's revisions in the quality measures that would be used in the 2009 PQRI (i.e., elimination of oncology measures #74 and #103; adoption of new cancer-related measures in melanoma, pain management, radiation dose limits, and staging for esophageal and lung cancers).

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*—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/ehrfieldguide.

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 July 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:

- AB16 (Evans) has passed through the Legislature and will soon be considered by the Governor. This bill mandates coverage of the HPV vaccine. The Governor vetoed an identical bill last year over concerns that it would increase premiums and that it was unnecessary since most plans already provided the vaccine. The

Governor has not yet indicated if his position on the bill has changed.

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.

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.

CMA's 2008 California Physician's Legal Handbook (CPLH) is now available. CPLH—an annual publication of CMA's *Center for Legal Affairs*—answers the legal questions most frequently asked by physicians. CPLH 2008 offers more than 4,500 pages of comprehensive legal information including current laws, regulations, and court decisions related to medical practice in California. The *Handbook* is available in a 7-volume print format and on CD-ROM. The CD-ROM offers all of the content of the print version, plus many enhancements including fully searchable content and hyperlinks that let you navigate within the CD-ROM and onto the web, as well as links to *Findlaw* for information on the cited court cases. The CD-ROM is priced at \$398 for members (\$480 for nonmembers), the print version costs \$798 (\$960 for nonmembers), and the CD-ROM/print combo combination costs \$898 (\$1,080 for nonmembers). To place an order, visit www.cmanet.org/bookstore or call (800) 882-1262. And, CMA members can access most of the CPLH content free via CMA On-Call, CMA's online library of medical-legal

information at www.cmanet.org/member.

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.]

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. You can access the new form and instructions online at www.cms.hhs.gov/bni. **CMS also recently updated its "incident to" policy.** The updates are described at www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/MM5288.pdf. Finally, **CCI quarterly updates** can be found at www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/MM6045.pdf.

NHIC/Medicare has updated its coverage and claims requirements for erythropoiesis stimulating agents (ESAs). The updated requirements are available at www.medicarenhic.com/providers/articles/esacoverage_0708.pdf.

California's next Medicare (J1MAC) carrier will be Palmetto GBA. They will assume operational responsibility for all Medicare claims (pending, in-process, and new) in California on September 2nd. For the latest information on the transition from NHIC/Medicare to Palmetto/J1MAC, **visit the Palmetto/J1MAC website at www.palmettogba.com/J1 or subscribe to Palmetto's e-mail ListServ at www.palmettogba.com/palmetto/j1.nsf/DocsCat/Home and follow the *E-Mail Update* links.** Specific resources are highlighted below:

- **Palmetto/J1MAC PowerPoint presentation** at www.palmettogba.com/Palmetto/J1.nsf/docsCat/Welcome%20to%20Palmetto%20GBA?opendocument?open&cat= (including

background information on Palmetto, timelines and other important information regarding the J1MAC, and details regarding the transition period)

- A **provider resource checklist** at [www.palmettogba.com/Palmetto/J1.nsf/files/ProviderResourceChecklist.pdf/\\$File/ProviderResourceChecklist.pdf](http://www.palmettogba.com/Palmetto/J1.nsf/files/ProviderResourceChecklist.pdf/$File/ProviderResourceChecklist.pdf)
- An **implementation timeline** at [www.palmettogba.com/Palmetto/J1.nsf/files/ImplementationTimeline.pdf/\\$File/ImplementationTimeline.pdf](http://www.palmettogba.com/Palmetto/J1.nsf/files/ImplementationTimeline.pdf/$File/ImplementationTimeline.pdf)
- A **transition article** at www.palmettogba.com/palmetto/j1.nsf/DocsCat/Transition%20Communication?opendocument
- A **transition manual** at www.palmettogba.com/palmetto/j1.nsf/docsCat/J1-Learning%20and%20Education-Manuals-Manuals?open&cat=J1-Learning%20and%20Education-Manuals-Manuals
- **Workshops, webinars, and teleconferences** at www.palmettogba.com/palmetto/j1.nsf/DocsCat/Home (*Events*)
- **Coverage policies (LCDs)** at www.palmettogba.com/palmetto/j1.nsf/DocsCat/Future%20Effective%20Date%20-%20Part%20B%20LCDs%20for%20Northern%20and%20Southern%20California?opendocument (including LCDs for ESAs; filgrastim, sargramostin, and pegfilgrastim; gonadotropin releasing hormone analogs; IVIG; oncologic in vitro chemoresponse assays; and, Oncotype DX)
- The **self-administered drug exclusion list** at [www.palmettogba.com/palmetto/j1.nsf/DocsCat/2008%20Self%20Administered%20Drug%20\(SAD\)%20Exclusion%20List?opendocument](http://www.palmettogba.com/palmetto/j1.nsf/DocsCat/2008%20Self%20Administered%20Drug%20(SAD)%20Exclusion%20List?opendocument) (including octreotide, interferon, and leuprolide)
- **Claims processing changes and/or reminders** at www.palmettogba.com/palmetto/j1.nsf/DocsCat/Part%20B?opendocument

- **Electronic data interchange (EDI)** information, application, enrollment, and early boarding at www.palmettogba.com/Palmetto/J1.nsf/DocsCat/Home (*EDI*)
- **Electronic funds transfer (EFT)** information and enrollment agreement at www.palmettogba.com/palmetto/j1.nsf/DocsCat/Home (*Electronic Funds Transfer*)

The *Medicare B Resource* (June 2008) is available online at www.medicarenhic.com/news/provider_news/mbr_jun08.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).

Since California failed to enact the FY2008-09 budget by June 30th, the *Department of Health Care Services* (DHCS) will direct the fiscal intermediary (EDS) to continue to pay to DHCS/MediCal practitioners per federal mandate. Through the new automated Value of Claim (VOC) process, all DHCS/MediCal providers whose held payments equal or exceed \$5,000 will be automatically sent a VOC letter on a weekly basis. This letter will be based on the amount approved for payment (often referred to as the "In Process" amount) each Monday and will be cumulative each week. This letter will be sent to the "Pay-To" address on file. Providers who have not updated their "Pay-To" address with Provider Enrollment Division (via a DHCS/MediCal Supplemental Changes DHCS 6209 form, revised 2/08), may not receive this letter. Providers who want this letter but have not received it and have a correct Pay-To address on the Provider Master File, can contact the Telephone Service Center (TSC) at (800) 541-5555 and choose option 15, and then option 13.

Effective for dates of service on or after August 1st, the *Department of Health Care Services* (DHCS) will discontinue the use of the current DHCS/MediCal interim codes for blood products and some services related to

administering those products. These interim codes will be replaced by HCPCS Level II and CPT-4 codes so as to be in compliance with provisions of HIPAA. Complete details of the billing changes, including manual replacement pages (MRPs), can be found in the June release of the DHCS/MediCal *Updates Bulletin*, which can be accessed at files.medi-cal.ca.gov/pubsdoco/Bulletins_menu.asp.

EDUCATION

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

ANCO's ASCO/ONS Highlights 2008

ANCO's *ASCO/ONS Highlights 2008* will summarize the major research and treatment advancements presented at this year's *ONS Congress* and *ASCO Annual Meeting*. The program will focus on breast, gastrointestinal, genitourinary, gynecologic, and lung cancers as well as hematological malignancies. The faculty will place these developments in context as to their immediate clinical utility. A plenary talk on pharmacogenomics will also be presented. *ASCO/ONS Highlights 2008* will take place on Saturday morning, September 6th, at *The Claremont Resort* in Oakland. Meeting announcements were mailed in early July and can be downloaded at www.anco-online.org/ascohl2008.html.

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, *Hyatt Regency*, 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. Sessions will cover increasing your revenue stream, economics of clinical trials, and how to best use NPs and PAs. Visit www.accc-cancer.org/mainevent for more information and to register.

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. 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. For assistance, contact Jeannie Cook at (203) 840-5562 and ask about special attendance rates for partners.

Additional Education Meetings

Other meetings of possible interest to ANCO member practices are:

July 20th-23rd

Cancer Clinical Trials and Personalized Medicine
American Association for Cancer Research
Monterey

July 24th

Updates on Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia/Small Lymphocytic Lymphoma (CLL/SLL)
CancerCare
Telephone Education Workshop

July 31st

The Tasmanian Devil Facial Tumour Disease: A Contagious Malignancy
Alta Bates Tumor Board
Alta Bates-Summit Medical Centers
(Ashby Campus)
Berkeley

September 26-28th

13th Annual North American Education Forum on Lymphoma for Lymphoma Patients, Survivors, and

Loved Ones

Lymphoma Research Foundation
San Francisco

September 29th-October 2nd

Oncology: Clinical Issues and Trends
Contemporary Forums
Las Vegas

October 20th-21st

2008 Cancer Center Business Summit: Community Oncology at the Crossroads—Building a Balanced Future
Chicago

November 20th-21st

5th International Conference: Integration Across the Spectrum of Cancer Care
Society for Integrative Oncology
Atlanta

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 Online

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 Online 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
- Palmetto/J1MAC 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.

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 August 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

The American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) has relocated to 2318 Mill Road, Suite 800, Alexandria VA effective July 11th. Their new telephone number is (571) 483-1300; their new FAX number is (571) 366-9530.

The ANCO *Directory of Members 2008* was mailed to ANCO physician members; nurse and office manager contacts; and, Corporate Member representatives the week of July 7th. 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.

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 *The Permanente Medical Group* (TPMG) will each receive value from Group Membership. ANCO thanks *The Permanente Medical Group* for joining ANCO. A complete roster of TPMG 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/cmecalendar.do
- www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/cme/conferences
- www.cme.ucsf.edu/cme

Stanford's 2nd *Annual GI Cancers* takes place August 22nd-24th at the *Mauna Lani Bay Resort* in Hawaii. Visit www.stanfordhospital.com/PDF/cme/GICancers08CME_r8aFnl.pdf for more information and to register.

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*
- Onyx Pharmaceuticals*
- biogenIDEC*
- Bristol-Myers Squibb Oncology*
- Celgene • Cephalon Oncology • Eisai*
- Enzon Pharmaceuticals*
- Genentech BioOncology*
- Genomic Health • Genzyme Oncology*
- GlaxoSmithKline Oncology • Hospira*
- ImClone Systems*
- Lash Group Healthcare Consultants*
- Lilly Oncology • Millennium*
- Novartis Oncology*
- Oncology Supply/ION • Ortho Biotech*
- OSI Pharmaceuticals*

OTN/Onmark, McKesson Specialty Companies

Pfizer Oncology • Pharmion
Roche Oncology • Sanofi Aventis Oncology
US Oncology Physician Services
Wyeth BioPharma • Vidacare

We especially wish to thank and welcome *ImClone Systems* and *Wyeth BioPharma* as new Corporate Members in 2008. *Clarient Diagnostics*, *Genitope Corporation*, and *Schering-Plough Oncology* did not renew their Corporate Memberships for 2008.

Genentech BioOncology informs ANCO that it is **informing doctors of damaged vitals of Herceptin**. *Genentech* said there is a risk of contamination and infections, but calls these risks "negligible".

Millennium informs ANCO that the *United States Food and Drug Administration* approved *Velcade* for the treatment of patients with previously untreated multiple myeloma and the treatment of patients with mantle cell lymphoma who have received at least one prior therapy.

Clinical Trial News

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.

Publications, Services, & Surveys

Legislation that cut fees doctors receive for giving chemotherapy to Medicare patients has not affected care so far, according to an article published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. Some groups complained the *Medicare Modernization Act of 2003*, which cut payments to doctors, would prompt physicians to drop patients or cut back on

services. But Alisa Shea of the *Duke University School of Medicine* and colleagues found no evidence Medicare patients had to travel any farther to get chemotherapy, or look any harder to find an oncologist to treat them. The researchers said they analyzed 5% of claims from Medicare for 2003 through 2006. The sample included more than 20,000 Medicare beneficiaries with newly diagnosed breast cancer, colorectal cancer, leukemia, lung cancer, or lymphoma. In 2003, 10% of patients got chemotherapy as inpatients. This fell to 8.8% in 2006, as the proportion of patients treated in physicians' offices remained at 68.7%. The rest were outpatients at hospitals or big clinics. The average time from diagnosis to first chemotherapy treatment was around 28 days throughout the study. The median distance traveled to treatment was 7 miles in 2003 and 8 miles in 2004 through 2006.

ASCO's continued dedication to enhancing the overall quality of cancer care is furthered with the publication of its most recent educational tool for oncologists, the ASCO Self-Evaluation Program (ASCO-SEP). Designed to keep physicians abreast of developments in various areas of oncology, ASCO-SEP provides an up-to-date overview of cancer, its treatment, and the supportive care needed to optimize quality of life of patients with cancer. The resource, available in both print and electronic formats, includes 19 chapters and a companion self-assessment tool with rationales that cover the full range of oncology topics, including major cancer types, epidemiology and cancer prevention, strategies for managing geriatric cancers, molecular biology, and an overview of biologic therapy. With this publication, ASCO provides a vehicle for users to validate their current knowledge base, as well as to improve their overall competency in oncology. Oncologists who use the program can earn continuing medical education (CME) credit for as many chapters as they complete, with a total of 43.5 *American Medical Association* Physician's Recognition Award Category 1 Credit(s)TM possible. ASCO-SEP is also a useful study tool for oncology trainees and practitioners preparing for certification exams or completing the maintenance of certification process. ASCO-SEP is available for purchase in two formats: online-

only (which includes access to all material and questions in an interactive, electronic format) and online in combination with the print edition. Price and purchasing information can be found in the ASCO Bookstore (at www.asco.org/ASCO/ASCO+Bookstore).

The August (Vol. 17, No. 2, May/June 2008) issue of ACCC's *Compendia-Based Drug Bulletin* is now available. ACCC's *Compendia-Based Drug Bulletin* is NOT a Medicare-recognized compendium. This publication is simply a compilation of oncology- and supportive-care indications contained within the *USP-DI* (no longer in print) and *AHFS-DI*. The *Bulletin* does not yet contain indications from the NCCN *Drugs & Biologics Compendium*, Thomson Micromedex *DrugDex*, or Elsevier Gold Standard *Clinical Pharmacology*. The *Bulletin* is available in searchable form at www.accc-cancer.org/drugindex/drugindex_search.asp.

The July/August (Vol. 23, No. 4) issue of ACCC's *Oncology Issues* features articles on The Top 10 Oncology Trends for 2008-2009, Secrets for Negotiating Payer Contracts, The Art of IT Contract Negotiation, and Improving Patient Adherence with Oral Chemotherapy. Visit oi.accc-cancer.org for more information.

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.