

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 • e-mail: jlgonzalez@aol.com
www.californiaoncology.org

Vol. 3, No. 1

January 9th, 2004

IN THIS ISSUE

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 routinely sent to physician member practices and corporate member contacts. The next regular *ANCO FAX News* will be published Friday, January 23rd.

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; jlgonzalez@aol.com.

ADVOCACY

[Editor's Note: ANCO meets regularly with national, regional, and statewide organizations to discuss issues of importance to oncology practices and people with cancer.

We continually seek input from members on agenda items for these meetings. Send your issues to the ANCO office.]

ACCC, ASCO, 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). We regularly participate with these organizations on matters of

national importance to oncology practices.]

The *Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services* (CMS) has issued an interim final rule revising the Medicare payments for drugs and drug administration payments for 2004 as required by the recently enacted *Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act*. The rule is available on the CMS website (www.cms.gov/physicians/pfs/); the GPCI adjusted amounts are available at the NHIC/Medicare website

**There is information in the
ANCO FAX News
for every member of your practice
or organization.
Pass it along!**

- ☐ Physician Members
- ☐ Nurse & Office Managers
- ☐ Office Staff
- ☐ Colleagues & Representatives

The *Association of Northern California Oncologists* (ANCO) is a professional association of medical oncologists and hematologists dedicated to promoting high professional standards of oncology 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, 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 billing, contracting, and coding. The information contained in the *ANCO FAX News* should not be used as a substitute for such advice.

(www.medicarenhic.com/cal_prov/fee_sched.shtml). A list of oncology-specific drugs and their payment rates can be accessed at ASCO's website (www.asco.org/medicare) or at the CMS website (www.cms.gov/providers/drugs). Changes are effective for dates of service beginning Thursday, January 1st. CMS estimates that Medicare revenues to oncologists from drugs will decline by \$510 million as a result of the rule and that physician fee schedule payments to oncologists will increase by the same amount.

A summary of the principal points of importance to oncology follows:

1. The payments for drug administration services have generally been increased.
2. Because each drug administration code now includes a physician work component, physicians can no longer bill a Level 1 visit on days when a patient receives chemotherapy but is not seen by the physician.
3. Because there is now a physician work component in the drug administration codes, physicians must use modifier -25 when a visit and a drug administration code are billed on the same day. Use of the modifier indicates that a separately identifiable evaluation and management service was provided.
4. CPT code 96408 (chemotherapy administration by push) can be billed once per day for each drug administered.

ASCO's *Clinical Practice Committee* (CPC) and *State/Regional Affiliates* teleconferenced on Thursday afternoon, January 8th to discuss changes in Medicare drug and practice expense reimbursement. In summary:

- ASCO is conducting an analysis of the CMS drug and practice expense reimbursement rates as well as constructing a tool for practices to use to analyze their impact.
- ASCO will submit to CMS detailed comments on the new drug and practice expense reimbursement rules.

- ASCO/MGMA are conducting a study of the impact of the new reimbursement on currently non-reimbursed service lines. The results of this study will be forwarded to CMS, Congress, and MedPAC.
- ASCO is considering how to contribute to the mandated MedPAC study of the impact of the legislation.
- ASCO continues to meet with the media on this issue expressing concern regarding the new law's impact on 2005 reimbursement and the need to have definitive information no later than mid-2004 for long-term planning.
- Member coding and billing questions from are being addressed and compiled as a *Frequently Asked Question* document that will become available on-line early next week.
- ASCO members should contribute data on drugs that will no longer be reimbursed at or above cost; on the impact of 20% co-payments on costly drugs used by Medicare beneficiaries and the bad debt this creates; on hospital outpatient referrals and how they are received by the hospital; and, on the suspension/ending of participation in clinical trials. This information will be compiled for CMS and Congress.
- The *Clinical Practice Committee* leadership would be happy teleconference with state/regional affiliate leadership/membership.

ANCO will also keep its members informed of developments as they happen with regard to this very important issue. In the meantime, please share how your practice plans on accommodating to the new Medicare reimbursement environment via e-mail to jlgonzalez@aol.com.

CMA, MOASC, and State Legislative/Regulatory Issues

[Editor's Note: ANCO and the Medical Oncology Association of Southern California (MOASC) are members of the California Medical Association's (CMA) House of Delegates and Council on Legislation. ANCO and MOASC cooperate on several joint ventures and coordinate activities in the

advocacy and membership benefit arenas. Each is represented at the *Board* meeting of the other.]

U.S. *District Judge* David Levi granted a **preliminary injunction in the lawsuit filed by CMA and other plaintiffs (and financially supported by ANCO and MOASC) to stop the 5% DHS/MediCal rate cut** that was set to go into effect on January 1st.

In granting the preliminary injunction, *Judge* Levi said that the state of California failed to consider how the hundreds of millions in cuts would affect access to care for poor, disabled, elderly and children whose health care is provided by DHS/MediCal.

"This is excellent news," said CMA CEO Jack Lewin, M.D. "Going forward, this ruling seems to thwart the current administration's additional 10 percent proposed reductions as well. The judge's decision will prevent further erosion of access to care for our most vulnerable patients."

The judge also ruled that cuts already made against DHS/MediCal managed care plans would have to be addressed separately. Attorneys for CMA and its co-plaintiffs are still reviewing what the ruling means for DHS/MediCal managed care plans (which account for about half of all DHS/MediCal recipients).

ASCO and MOASC are organizing the **1st Annual Symposium on Genomics in Clinical Oncology** in La Quinta on February 27-28th. David Botstein, Ph.D., *Princeton University* will receive the *First Annual Sebastian George Memorial Award*. Additional faculty include David B. Agus, M.D., *Cedars-Sinai Medical Center*, Darell Bigner, M.D., *Duke Comprehensive Cancer Center*, Paul Bunn, M.D., *University of Colorado*, Robert B. Diasio, M.D., *University of Alabama*, Brain J. Druker, M.D., *Oregon Health and Science University*, and Edith Perez, M.D., *The*

Mayo Clinic. Registration forms are available from the ANCO office.

NHIC/Medicare & DHS/MediCal

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

NHIC/Medicare has not yet appointed a **new Medical Director**. It is expected that a new *Medical Director* will be in place in early 2004,

The next *NHIC/Medicare Carrier Advisory Committee* (CAC) **meeting** takes place in Oakland on January 21st; the next **ANCO•MOASC meeting with NHIC/Medicare** will take place at a date and location to be determined.

EDUCATION

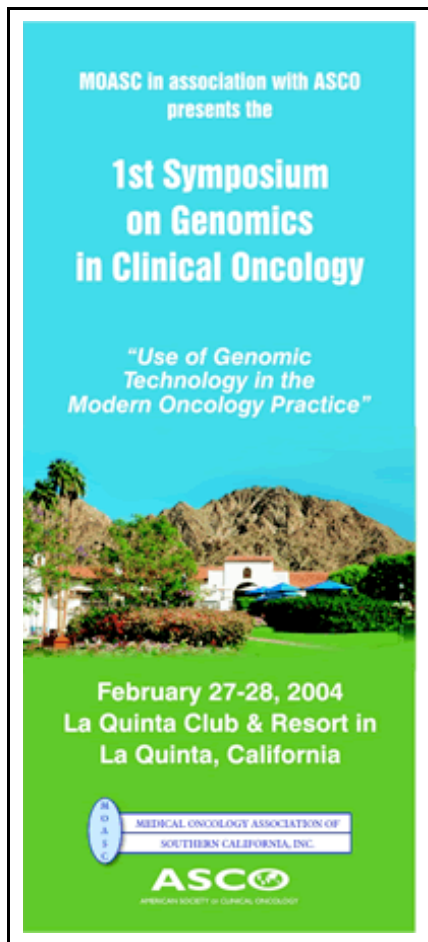
[*Editor's Note:* ANCO regularly organizes clinical and professional education meetings throughout the year and throughout Northern California.]

Review of the 26th Annual San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium

On Wednesday, January 21st, Helen K. Chew, M.D., F.A.C.P., *UC Davis*, will review the most clinically relevant studies presented at last month's meeting in San Antonio. This meeting will take place at The Claremont Resort, Oakland. *AstraZeneca*, *Novartis Oncology*, *Ortho Biotech*, and *Pfizer Oncology* are sponsoring this meeting. Announcements were mailed in early December.

Medicare Reimbursement for Oncology 2004

On Tuesday through Thursday, January 27-29th, in Fresno, Sacramento, and San José, Roberta Buell, M.B.A., will present the latest information on the changes in Medicare reimbursement for oncology. The speaker will



describe these changes as well as those planned for 2005, how to analyze their impact on your oncology practice, and possible responses to these impacts. Analytical tools will be described and illustrated. Copies of distributed materials will be available after the meetings for those unable to attend. Contact the ANCO office to request copies. *Eli Lilly and Company* and *Ortho Biotech* are sponsoring these meetings. Announcements were mailed in mid December.

Other ANCO Meetings

Additional ANCO meetings (*ASH Highlights*, *ASCO Highlights*, an *Annual Meeting*) are in the planning stages and will be announced as they are scheduled.

Additional Education Meetings

Other meetings of interest to ANCO member practices are:

January 16-18th
3rd Annual Clinical Cancer Update
University of California,
San Francisco
Lake Tahoe

January 22nd-24th
Gastrointestinal Cancers Symposium: Current Status and Future Directions for Prevention and Management
American Society of Clinical Oncology
San Francisco

January 25th-31st
Cancer Guides
Center for Mind-Body Medicine
Oakland

February 7-11th
Annual Meeting on Women's Cancer
Society of Gynecologic Oncologists
San Diego

February 27-28th
1st Annual Symposium on Genomics in Clinical Oncology
American Society of Clinical Oncology &
Medical Oncology Association of Southern
California
La Quinta

March 6th
Annual Meeting
Allison Taylor Holbrooks Breast Cancer
Research Fund
San Francisco

March 12-14th
6th Northern California Tumor Board at Silverado
Stanford University School of Medicine
Napa

May 5-7th
2004 Spring Conference and Annual Meeting
California Hospice Foundation
San José

June 5-8th
40th Annual Meeting
American Society of Clinical Oncology
New Orleans, LA

June 10-11th
Pain and End-of-Life Care
University of California, San Francisco
San Francisco

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

ANCO thanks

AstraZeneca, Eli Lilly and Company,
Novartis Oncology, Ortho Biotech,
& Pfizer Oncology

for supporting clinical and professional education.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

[Editor's Note: All ANCO members are eligible for benefits from the *California Oncology Consortium* (COC) and *Hematology Oncology Leadership Network* (HOLN).]

California Oncology Consortium (COC)

The COC is a cooperative venture of ANCO and MOASC. The *Consortium* maintains a web site (www.californiaoncology.org); has a ListServ for the exchange of general/administrative and clinical information; and, has a group purchasing organization (GPO).

Web Sites. I encourage all ANCO members to visit www.californiaoncology.org for the latest information impacting the practice of medical oncology.

ListSers. The COC operates two e-mail based communications systems called ListSers.

The COC-ADMIN ListServ is available to all ANCO and MOASC physician members,

practice managers and nurses, and Corporate Member representatives. It is a source for the latest *Association* news, special bulletins, legislative reports, and other information impacting oncology practices. To post an item to the COC-ADMIN ListServ, send e-mail to COC-ADMIN@californiaoncology.org.

The COC-CLINICAL ListServ is open only to ANCO and MOASC physician members for the secure exchange of information and ideas between physicians. To post an item to the COC-CLINICAL ListServ, send e-mail to COC-CLINICAL@californiaoncology.org.

All members and their staffs are encouraged to subscribe, participate, and use these ListSers to communicate with colleagues about issues of importance to oncology practices by sending their e-mail addresses to the ANCO office at jlgonzalez@aol.com.

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

ION reports that *Bristol-Myers Squibb Oncology* is recalling BiCNU (Lot #LKM11) because it did not meet potency specifications when held for eight hours at room temperature after reconstitution, **and that *Aventis* is recalling Gammar** (Lot #A631805) because it exhibits an increased frequency of non-serious, labeled adverse events of a delayed onset allergic type (principally hives and itching).

The COC continues to offer a **Zoladex Discount Program** via *AstraZeneca*. Discounts of up to 40% are possible through this program. Contact your local *AstraZeneca* urology representative for additional information.

Hematology Oncology Leadership Network (HOLN)

HOLN is a network of state oncology and oncology manager societies from Northern and Southern California, Connecticut, Georgia, New Jersey, Ohio/West Virginia, Pennsylvania, South

Carolina, and Virginia. As an ANCO member, you may enroll in HOLN and benefit from discounted contracting with several major pharmaceutical manufacturers for medical supplies and drugs. HOLN-contracted prices are honored at several distributors, including *Oncology Supply* and *Oncology Therapeutics Network*. Finally, value-added services are also being offered to HOLN participants.

A complete current (as of December 2003) price list of HOLN contracted products is available from the ANCO office or online at www.holn.org. **HOLN recently announced contract (i.e., product, rebate, and/or pricing) changes for *Sicor* products.**

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Annual Election Results

The ANCO membership elected the following **members to the *Board of Directors*** (location; for the indicated terms):

Richard A. Bohannon, M.D.
(San Francisco; 2004-2006)

Russell I. Hardy, M.D.
(Ukiah; 2004-2006)

L. Wayne Keiser, M.D.
(Santa Rosa; 2004-2006)

Roger Shiffman, M.D.
(Monterey; 2004-2006)

Drs. Adler (San Mateo; 2004-2005), Alexander (Santa Cruz; 2004-2005), Glassberg (San Francisco; 2004), Keech (Chico; 2004-2005) Kramer (San Francisco; 2004-2005), Miller (Sacramento; 2004), Patel (San Leandro; 2004), and Yu (Sunnyvale; 2004) continue on the *Board*.

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 meeting proposals, and ways to serve the membership. *Board* meetings are open to the membership. The **next regularly scheduled ANCO *Board of Directors* meeting** will take place on January 21st. 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 *Center for Mind-Body Medicine* (www.cmbm.org) invites one ANCO member to attend the 2004 *CancerGuides* weeklong training program as an ANCO *CancerGuides* Fellow. The Fellow will receive a full tuition scholarship (valued at about \$2,000).

CancerGuides is a comprehensive integrative cancer treatment-training program focusing on integrating the best of conventional medicine with proven complementary approaches, such as proper nutrition, stress management, and exercise. This year's program will be held on January 25th-31st at The Claremont Resort, Oakland. Interested members should contact Melissa Dickey at (202) 966-7338 x16 as soon as possible.

Two ANCO members are running for ASCO office. Peter Eisenberg, M.D., ANCO *Founder* and a past *President*, is running for the *ASCO Board of Directors*. Sandra Horning, M.D., is running for *ASCO President*. The ANCO *Board of Directors* endorses and encourages all members to support their candidacies. Vote before January 15th.

The ANCO Directory of Members & Membership Information 2003 was published and mailed to all members in early June 2003. An updated edition will be published in June 2004. Additional copies are available from the ANCO office.

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

PHYSICIAN MEMBERS

Edward Chang, M.D.

UC Davis Cancer Center
4501 X Street, Suite 3016
Sacramento, CA 95817
Telephone: (916) 734-3772
FAX: (916) 734-7946
edchang@aol.com

Richard Guy, M.D.

UC Davis Cancer Center
4501 X Street, Suite 3016

Sacramento, CA 95817
Telephone: (916) 734-3772
FAX: (916) 734-7946
richguy101@hotmail.com

John F. Kiraly, III, M.D.

Delta-Sierra Hematology & Oncology
2407 West Vine Street, Suite A
Lodi, CA 95242-3730
Contact: Rena Kiraly, R.N.
Telephone: (209) 334-1614
FAX: (209) 334-0115
jkiraly@deltasierrahemonc.com

Alex Metzger, M.D.

UC Davis Cancer Center
4501 X Street, Suite 3016
Sacramento, CA 95817
Telephone: (916) 734-3772
FAX: (916) 734-7946
alex.metzger@ucdmc.ucdavis.edu

Daniel P. Mirda, M.D.

Redwood Regional Oncology Center
1100 Trancas Street, Suite 256
Napa, CA 94558
Contact: Ulla Philbin, R.N.
Telephone: (707) 253-7161
FAX: (707) 253-0476

Nitin Rohatgi, M.D.

Sacramento Center for
Hematology & Medical Oncology
2800 L Street, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95816
Contacts: Laura Azevedo, R.N.
Mathew Ferron, R.N.
Elizabeth Kenealey, R.N.
Debby Stoller, R.N.
Debbie Thomas, R.N.
Beth Ann Williams
Telephone: (916) 454-6700
FAX: (916) 454-6714

Gregory B. Smith, M.D.

660 Sanitarium Road, Suite 304
Deer Park, CA 94576
Contact: Donna Vance, R.N.
Telephone: (707) 967-5721
FAX: (707) 967-5722
xsmith@sbcglobal.net

NURSE & OFFICE MANAGERS**Patty Cerda, R.N.**

California Oncology
of the Central Valley
6121 North Thesta, Suite 204
Fresno, CA 93710
Telephone: (559) 438-7390
FAX: (559) 438-7166

Russ Desch

Visalia Medical Clinic
5400 West Hillsdale Drive
Visalia, CA 93291
Telephone: (559) 738-7547
FAX: (559) 627-0106
rdesch@vmchealth.com

Brad Duke

East Bay Medical Oncology-Hematology
Associates
2700 Grant Street, Suite 106
Concord, CA 94520
Telephone: (925) 687-2570
FAX: (925) 687-2847
antiochduke@sbcglobal.net

Mathew Ferron, R.N.

Sacramento Center for
Hematology & Medical Oncology
2800 L Street, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95816
Telephone: (916) 454-6700
FAX: (916) 454-6714

Rena Kiraly, R.N.

Delta-Sierra Hematology & Oncology
2407 West Vine Street, Suite A
Lodi, CA 95242-3730
Telephone: (209) 334-1614
FAX: (209) 334-0115
rkiraly@deltasierrahemaonc.com

Tima Nanji, R.N.

California Cancer Care Medical Group
1524 McHenry Avenue, Suite 120
Modesto, CA 95350
Telephone: (209) 524-7000
FAX: (209) 527-5601

Maryann Prusniskas, R.N.

California Cancer Care Medical Group

1524 McHenry Avenue, Suite 120
Modesto, CA 95350
Telephone: (209) 524-7000
FAX: (209) 527-5601

Cheryl Ricker, R.N.

California Oncology
of the Central Valley
6121 North Thesta, Suite 204
Fresno, CA 93710
Telephone: (559) 438-7390
FAX: (559) 438-7166

Nancy Robinson, R.N.

Visalia Medical Clinic
5400 West Hillsdale Drive
Visalia, CA 93291
Telephone: (559) 738-7547
FAX: (559) 627-0106

Donna Vance, R.N.

660 Sanitarium Road, Suite 304
Deer Park, CA 94576
Telephone: (707) 967-5721
FAX: (707) 967-5722
dmvance@sbcglobal.net

Corporate & Institutional Member News

ANCO thanks the following **Corporate Members** for their generous support that enables ANCO to grow and expand its services for the 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:

*American Pharmaceutical Partners
AMGEN • AstraZeneca • Aventis
Bayer Biologicals • Berlex Laboratories
Bristol-Myers Squibb Oncology
Cell Therapeutics • Chiron Corporation
Documedics • Eli Lilly and Company
Genentech BioOncology • Glaxo SmithKline
IDEC Pharmaceuticals • IMPATH
International Oncology Network
Ligand Pharmaceuticals
MedImmune Oncology • MGI Pharma
Millennium • National Oncology Alliance
Novartis Oncology • Oncology Supply
Oncology Therapeutics Network*

*Millennium • Oncotech • Ortho Biotech
Pfizer Oncology • Roche Oncology
Sanofi Synthelabo • SuperGen
US Oncology • Wyeth Oncology*

Members are encouraged to provide the names of organizations that are not currently Corporate Members to the ANCO office.

AMGEN's Aranesp has been added to the DHS/MediCal list of contract drugs effective January 1st. In addition, Aranesp retains HCPCS code J0880 for the physician-office setting.

Sanofi Synthelabo's Eloxatin has been assigned HCPCS code J9263 (0.5mg).

We thank our current roster of **Institutional Members** for their support:

- *Stanford University Medical Oncology*
- *University of California, Davis, Cancer Center*
- *University of California, San Francisco*

The **6th Annual Northern California Tumor Board at Silverado** will be presented by the *Stanford University School of Medicine* from March 12-14th. Tumor boards on cancer genetics; breast, gastrointestinal, genitourinary, and thoracic cancers; hematological malignancies and lymphoma; and, supportive and palliative care will be presented by faculty from *Stanford, UC Davis, and UC San Francisco*, and the community. Registration and case submission materials can be obtained from ANCO or from Beverly Kelly at (650) 736-1454 (beverlyk@stanford.edu).

UC Davis, ANCO, and several other local agencies are cooperating on a National Institutes of Health project aimed at overcoming barriers to early phase clinical trials. Please participate in the survey if you receive one.

The **3rd Annual Clinical Cancer Update** takes place in Lake Tahoe on January 16-18th. Presented by the *Department of Surgery, University of California, San Francisco*, this course will review recent advances in the understanding and treatment of breast, colorectal, genitourinary and lung cancers. Visit cme.ucsf.edu/calendar/CourseDetail.asp?

CourseNumber=MSU04004 for more information.

Pain and End-of-Life Care takes place in San Francisco on June 10-11th. Presented by the *University of California, San Francisco*, this course is designed for all physicians, nurses, and pharmacists who care for patients in pain or with life-threatening illness. Visit cme.ucsf.edu/calendar/CourseDetail.asp?CourseNumber=DMM04462 for more information.

For additional information on meetings being organized by the *UCSF Comprehensive Cancer Center*, visit cc.ucsf.edu/news/events.html.

Membership Dues for 2004

Membership renewal notices were mailed to all members in early December 2003. Please renew your membership for 2004 as soon as possible. Be sure to take advantage of dues discounts and provide ANCO with the name(s) of an office and nurse manager contact. Those not renewing their membership by June 1st will be deleted from the *Directory of Members* and will no longer be eligible for participation in ANCO's discounted pharmaceutical pricing programs. Contact the ANCO office if you did not receive or have misplaced your membership dues renewal notice.

ANCO seeks new members. Please 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!