

# ANCO FAX News

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Vol. 3, No. 17

August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2004

## INTRODUCTION

The *ANCO FAX News* focuses on ANCO's core activities—advocacy, clinical and professional education, membership benefits, and *Association* news. While membership mailings, FAX broadcasts, and ListServ postings continue, the *ANCO FAX News* summarizes this information in a regular forum of important news to members. Contact the ANCO office for additional information regarding any item published in the *ANCO FAX News* or to contribute items.

The *ANCO FAX News* is sent to physician member practices and corporate member contacts. The next regular *ANCO FAX News* will be published on Friday, September 10<sup>th</sup>.

Comments on and contributions to the *ANCO FAX News* are always welcome and encouraged at ANCO, P.O. Box 151109, San Rafael, CA 94915-1109; Voice: (415) 472-3960; FAX: (415) 472-3961; ExecDir@anco-online.org.

**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

## 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.]*

**ANCO and ASCO continue to work towards ensuring that people with cancer have access to quality cancer care in the community.** Here is the latest with regard to the *Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 (MMA)*:

- the proposed 2005 *Medicare Physician Fee Schedule* is available at [www.cms.hhs.gov/regulations/pfs/](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/regulations/pfs/)

The *Association of Northern California Oncologists* (ANCO) is an 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, 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.

2005/1429p.asp. Note especially pp. 164-178 and 366-387 discussing drug and practice expense reimbursement, respectively.

- ASCO's spreadsheet tool, guide, and talking points are available at [www.anco-online.org](http://www.anco-online.org). Run your numbers, report your data to ASCO, and use this information and the talking points to tell your *Senators* and *Congressional Representatives* how ASPs will impact your practice and patients.

- ASCO has also prepared an *Ask ASCO MMA Information Kit* to educate key decision-makers about the impact of changes in Medicare for cancer care. Contact ASCO's *Public Policy & Clinical Affairs Department* at (703) 299-1050 or at [publicpolicy@asco.org](mailto:publicpolicy@asco.org) to request your copy and to let them know about your local efforts to protect community-based cancer care.

- Participate in the AMA RUC survey process of proposed new CPT codes by contacting Bela Sastry at [sastryb@asco.org](mailto:sastryb@asco.org) or calling her at (703) 299-1050.

Visit [www.asco.org/mma](http://www.asco.org/mma) or call ASCO's billing and coding hotline at (703) 299-1054 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 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.]

*State Senator* Deborah Ortiz's *Senate Joint Resolution* (SJR) 25, asking *Congress* to correct

the cancer care provisions of Medicare reform, passed the *State Senate* and *Assembly*. ANCO urges its members to contact *State Senator* Ortiz to thank her for SJR25.

**ANCO is cooperating with CMA in its survey of physician practice costs.** The survey process has been extended through August 31<sup>st</sup>. You can participate in the survey by visiting [www.calphys.org/html/bb609.asp](http://www.calphys.org/html/bb609.asp).

ANCO endorses the CMA's *Pain Palliation and Politics: Pain Management and End-of-Life Care in California's Regulatory Environment* programs. The Northern California meeting will take place on September 10-11<sup>th</sup> at the Sacramento Convention Center/Sheraton Grand Hotel. ANCO members are eligible for discounted registration. Visit [www.cmanet.org](http://www.cmanet.org) and select "Conferences, Meetings, and Seminars" for additional information.

The CMA's 8<sup>th</sup> *Annual Leadership Academy* will take place in La Quinta from November 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>. The theme for this year's *Academy* is *Acceleration: Access, Quality, and Cost in the Era of Consumerism*. Additional information is provided in the full-page

announcement at the end of this edition of the *ANCO FAX News* or is 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.]

Visit [www.medicarenhic.com/whats\\_new/whats\\_new.shtml](http://www.medicarenhic.com/whats_new/whats_new.shtml) to learn the latest information from NHIC/Medicare.

**A recent DHS/MediCal Newsletter** (August 2004, pp. 3-4) outlines a new policy and X-code (X7493) for darbepoetin. The X-code is effective for dates of service on or after September 1<sup>st</sup>. Covered diagnoses include, but are not limited to, anemia due to treatment with chemotherapeutic agents for cancer (ICD-9

#### **IN MEMORIUM**

Steven Thompson  
*Vice President, Government Relations*  
*California Medical Association*

ANCO expresses its deepest sympathies to its colleagues at the CMA and Steven's family on the passing of this energetic and passionate advocate on behalf of California's physicians.

codes 140.0-239.9 for neoplasms or V58.1 for chemotherapy, and 285.22 for anemia in neoplastic disease).

A new DHS/MediCal policy affecting physician office laboratories (POLs) performing moderate and high complexity tests, which include CBCs via a Coulter counter, is being implemented September 1<sup>st</sup>. Previously, DHS/MediCal has accepted CLIA certification, and the tests have been billed under the physician provider number, coupled with the E&M visit. Effective September 1<sup>st</sup>, the POL must apply for a separate clinical laboratory provider number (the application form is 30 pages long), the physician must be certified as the laboratory director, and all testing staff must be independently credentialed.

Additionally, the POL may be subject to regulatory inspection over and above CLIA.

## EDUCATION

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

### ASCO Highlights 2004

On Tuesday evening, September 14<sup>th</sup>, at The Claremont Resort in Oakland, a distinguished faculty from ANCO's Institutional Members will present ANCO's annual *ASCO Highlights 2004*. This year's agenda and faculty is:

- **Hematological Malignancies**  
Steve Coutre, M.D., *Stanford*
- **Gastrointestinal Cancers**  
George A. Fisher, M.D., *Stanford*
- **Genitourinary Cancers**  
Primo Lara, Jr., M.D., *UC Davis*
- **Breast Cancer**  
Hope Rugo, M.D., *UC San Francisco*

- **Lung Cancer**

Heather Wakelee, M.D., *Stanford*

*ASCO Highlights 2004* is accredited by ASCO for 3 CEUs. Meeting announcements and registration forms were mailed in mid June.

### ANCO's 2004 Annual Meeting

ANCO will hold its 2004 *Annual Meeting* from Friday evening, October 1<sup>st</sup>, through Sunday morning, October 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Hyatt Regency Monterey. Physician members and their nurse and practice managers should plan on attending this event. A distinguished national and local faculty will present the latest national and statewide legislative and regulatory information along with how to use practice management techniques and information technology to meet the challenges faced by medical oncology practice in 2005 and beyond. The ANCO 2004 *Annual Meeting* is accredited by ASCO for 9 CEUs. The topic(s)/speaker(s) include:

- Dean H. Gesme, Jr., M.D., *Chair, ASCO CPC*, on national legislative/regulatory issues.
- *Senator* Deborah Ortiz,

*Chair, California State Senate Health Committee*, & a CMA representative, on California legislative/regulatory issues.

- Joseph S. Bailes, M.D., Peter D. Eisenberg, M.D., and Joseph V. Simone, M.D., on quality cancer care.
- Edward P. Ambinder, M.D., *Chair, ASCO's Internet Services Committee*, on information technology in the practice setting.
- Catherine Harvey, D.P.H., on oncology nursing.

#### ANCO thanks

AMGEN, APP/Abraxis Oncology, AstraZeneca, Aventis, Berlex Laboratories, biogenIDEC, Bristol-Myers Squibb Oncology, Cell Therapeutics, Eli Lilly and Company, Genentech BioOncology, Genitope Corporation, Genomic Health, Genta, GlaxoSmithKline, IMPAC, International Oncology Network, MGI Pharma, Millennium, Myriad Genetics Laboratories, National Oncology Alliance, Novartis Oncology, Oncology Supply, Oncology Therapeutics Network, Ortho Biotech, OSI Pharmaceuticals, Pfizer Oncology, Pharmion, Roche Oncology, Sanofi-Synthelabo, Schering-Plough Oncology, SuperGen, & Wyeth Oncology

for supporting clinical and professional education.

- Roberta Buell, M.B.A., and Patricia Falconer, M.B.A., on ANCO's DIMA Practice Preparedness Survey.

Meeting announcements and registration forms were mailed in early August. Make your hotel accommodations now by calling (831) 372-1234 and return your registration forms to the ANCO office via FAX at (415) 472-3961.

### ***Additional Education Meetings***

Other meetings of interest to ANCO member practices are:

September 10-12<sup>th</sup>

*Gastrointestinal Malignancy Program*  
International Oncology Network  
Boston

October 9<sup>th</sup>

*Oncology Care Update*  
San Francisco Bay Area Oncology Nursing Society

October 15-17<sup>th</sup>

*Clinical Trials Workshop for the Community Oncology Team*  
ASCO & Oncology Nursing Society  
Dallas

October 17-20<sup>th</sup>

*24<sup>th</sup> Annual Nurses Symposium*  
Scripps Cancer Center  
San Diego

October 28<sup>th</sup>

*Practice Performance: Maintaining the Health of Your Patients and Your Practice*  
Innovative Medical Communications  
San Francisco

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

## **MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS**

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

### ***ANCO On-Line***

ANCO's independent website has been redesigned and re-launched at [www.anco-online.org](http://www.anco-online.org). It features the following:

- Links to affiliated organizations.

- A general description of the *Association* and its activities.
- ANCO's advocacy information, educational meeting announcements and materials, and other publications.

In addition, a weblog archives important news for oncology practices posted on an almost daily basis. Among the items posted on [www.anco-online.org/news/index.html](http://www.anco-online.org/news/index.html) since the last edition of the *ANCO FAX News* are:

- ACCC's 21<sup>st</sup> *National Oncology Economics Conference* and *Life in the New Medicare Era* meetings
- ASCO's e-News, MMA Special Alert, *MMA Today*, and New Colon Cancer Guideline
- CIGNA Claim Settlements
- CMA's Security Rx Partner Awaiting State Approval
- CMS/Medicare Updates—Incident to Services, and Medicare Replacement Drug Demonstration
- *Health Information Technology 2004* meeting
- NHIC/Medicare Website Updates

ANCO urges its members to bookmark [www.anco-online.org](http://www.anco-online.org) and refer to it often. Your suggestions are welcome and encouraged.

### ***California Oncology Consortium (COC)***

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

**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.

On Friday, August 20<sup>th</sup>, through Sunday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>, ION sponsored a *Northern California Protocol Retreat* for ANCO physician members. Approximately 30 members attended this meeting. Visit [www.anco-online.org/ionanco.html](http://www.anco-online.org/ionanco.html) to download copies of the presentations made at this meeting.

NOA is organizing several forthcoming clinical and professional education meetings, including:

- *New Advances in Supportive Care*, September 25<sup>th</sup>, San Francisco, a half-day ONS-accredited program on supportive care issues of interest to the oncology nursing professional including management of nausea and vomiting, anemia, chemotherapy-induced neutropenia; the role of bisphosphonates in the management of cancer patients; and, special considerations in the management of elderly patients.

NOA also provides its members general HIPAA compliance support via its *HIPAA Compliance Toolkit* that addresses a practice's need to meet complicated, intricate HIPAA compliance rules and regulations. The *Toolkit* includes a set of draft policies and procedures, templates for forms and letters, a HIPAA training section, and a CD-ROM containing custom-ready forms. NOA recently added a chapter on *Research and the Privacy Rule*. A forthcoming chapter will address the *HIPAA Security Rule*. To request a free *HIPAA Compliance Toolkit*, please contact your NOA member services representative at (866) 466-2462 or send e-mail to [hipaa@noainc.com](mailto:hipaa@noainc.com)

### ***Hematology Oncology Leadership Network (HOLN)***

HOLN is a network of state oncology and oncology manager societies. 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*. A complete current price list of

HOLN contracted products is available from the ANCO office or online at [www.holn.org](http://www.holn.org). HOLN recently announced changes (i.e., product, rebate, and/or pricing) for *Sicor* contracts.

## **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 meeting proposals, and ways to better serve the membership. *Board* meetings are open to the membership. The next regularly scheduled ANCO *Board of Directors* meeting will take place on September 14<sup>th</sup>. 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 & Membership Information 2004* was published and mailed to all physician members; nurse and office manager contacts; and, Corporate Member representatives last June. Additional copies are available from the ANCO office upon request.

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

### **ALPHABETICAL DIRECTORY OF PHYSICIAN MEMBERS**

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## ALPHABETICAL DIRECTORY OF NURSE & OFFICE MANAGER CONTACTS

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## **Corporate 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:

*AMGEN • APP/Abraxis Oncology  
AstraZeneca • Bayer Biologicals  
Berlex Laboratories • biogenIDEC  
Bristol-Myers Squibb Oncology  
Cell Therapeutics • Chiron Corporation  
Eli Lilly and Company  
Genentech BioOncology  
Genitope Corporation • Genomic Health  
Genta • Glaxo SmithKline  
International Oncology Network  
Lash Group Healthcare Consultants  
Ligand Pharmaceuticals  
MedImmune Oncology • MGI Pharma  
Millennium • National Oncology Alliance  
Novartis Oncology • Oncology Supply  
Oncology Therapeutics Network  
Oncotech • Ortho Biotech  
OSI Pharmaceuticals • Pfizer Oncology  
Roche Oncology • Sanofi-Synthelabo  
Schering-Plough Oncology • SuperGen  
US Oncology • Wyeth Oncology*

We especially wish to thank and welcome *Genitope Corporation, Genomic Health, Genta, Lash Group Healthcare Consultants, OSI Pharmaceuticals, and Schering-Plough Oncology* as new Corporate Members in 2004. *Aventis* and *IMPATH* are no longer ANCO Corporate Members.

*biogenIDEC* is sponsoring a meeting entitled *Expanding Treatment Options for Indolent Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma (NHL)* with David G. Maloney, M.D., Ph.D., *Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center*, at 6:30PM on Tuesday, September 7<sup>th</sup>, at *John Bently's* in Redwood City. For more information or to register for this meeting, please call (800) 392-4030.

*Eli Lilly and Company* received FDA approval on August 19<sup>th</sup> for Alimta (Pemetrexed) for non-small cell lung cancer as a single agent for

second line treatment of patients with locally advanced or metastatic disease (ICD-9 codes 162.0-162.9).

### ***Institutional Member News***

ANCO initiated an institutional membership in 2002. 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*

Stanford's **9<sup>th</sup> Biennial National Symposium on Hematopoietic Cell Transplantation** takes place at Stanford on September 30<sup>th</sup>. The presenter is Robert S. Negrin, M.D. Visit [med.stanford.edu/seminars/details-documents.jsp?semid=2431](http://med.stanford.edu/seminars/details-documents.jsp?semid=2431) for more information.

Stanford's **Anal Cancer: Prevention, Diagnosis, and Treatment** takes place at Stanford on October 28<sup>th</sup>. The presenter is Mark L. Welton, M.D. Visit [med.stanford.edu/seminars/details-documents.jsp?semid=2415](http://med.stanford.edu/seminars/details-documents.jsp?semid=2415) for more information.

UCD's **5<sup>th</sup> Annual Advances in Oncology: Updates from ASCO, AACR, and SWOG** meeting takes place in Sacramento on October 30<sup>th</sup>.

For additional information on **continuing medical education meetings being organized by our Institutional Members**, please visit:

- [med.stanford.edu/seminars/cme-all.jsp?qcme=on](http://med.stanford.edu/seminars/cme-all.jsp?qcme=on)
- [www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/cme/Confrnce/Confrnce.htm](http://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/cme/Confrnce/Confrnce.htm)
- [www.cme.ucsf.edu/cme/index.aspx?Display=Date](http://www.cme.ucsf.edu/cme/index.aspx?Display=Date)

### ***Publications, Services, & Surveys***

ANCO will be purchasing bulk copies of ASCO's ***Practical Tips for the Practicing Oncologist*** (3<sup>rd</sup> edition) for distribution to all member practices. There will be no need for individual member practices to purchase a copy of this book. *Practical Tips* answers the most commonly asked questions about coding,

coverage, reimbursement, and regulatory issues for medical oncology services. Watch for your copy in the Fall.

For the second consecutive year ANCO members raised their patient satisfaction survey scores and significantly outscored other practices in Sullivan/Luallin's national hematology/oncology database. A total of 37 physicians participated in the survey, to which 1,008 patients responded. Nearly all scores were above the 2003 baseline. The improvements noted in the table below take on greater significance in that specialist scores are not evenly distributed—the database ranges from a low score of 3.92 to a high score of 4.81. In this context, the upward trend is statistically significant.

**ANCO Patient Satisfaction Survey  
Two-Year Comparison of Mean Scores  
(on a scale of 0-5)**

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>
Appointment	4.50	4.44
Staff	4.76	4.72
Communication	4.52	4.47
Physician	4.70	4.63
Facility	4.60	4.56
<b>Overall Satisfaction</b>	4.76	4.69

The challenge for practices with high survey scores is to avoid complacency by noting that, while the results indicate improvement, the medical marketplace continues to be more competitive. Physicians in every specialty are competing for patient loyalty and referrals despite crowded schedules, more informed patients, lean staffing, and limited resources.

Practices should celebrate the high scores while identifying performance areas that can be improved prior to the next survey cycle (in 2006). One strategy would be a referring physician survey to obtain valid feedback on (a) how well your office meets the expectations of primary care doctors; and (b) what patients say about you when they return to their family physician. For more information about referrer surveys, please contact *Sullivan/Luallin Healthcare Consulting* at (619) 283-8988.