

ANCO FAX News

Association of Northern California Oncologists
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INTRODUCTION

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

The *ANCO FAX News* is sent to physician member practices and corporate member contacts. The next regular *ANCO FAX News* will be published on Friday, October 15th.

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

ADVOCACY

[Editor's Note: ANCO meets regularly with national, regional, and statewide organizations to discuss issues of importance to 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):

- ASCO held a briefing on September 8th for *Congressional* staff and the media on the effects that cuts in Medicare

**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 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.

reimbursements will have on cancer care next year and has conducted many visits on *Capitol Hill* in recent weeks. These activities have refocused attention on the cancer care provisions in the MMA.

- ASCO's key findings on cancer care cuts in the MMA show that, according to data from 93 community practices, the cuts to reimbursement for cancer drugs will be an average of 15%, nearly double the 8% cut predicted by CMS, and that revenue for chemotherapy services will drop anywhere from 43-54% in 2005. Full results of these studies are available at www.anco-online.org.

- *Representative Charlie Norwood (R-GA)* has sent a "Dear Colleague" letter to *Members of Congress* expressing concern about the cuts to cancer care, and intends to introduce legislation addressing this issue before *Congress* recesses in early October.

- ASCO's spreadsheet tool, guide, talking points, and study results are available at www.anco-online.org. Run your numbers, report your data to ASCO, and use this information to tell your *Senators* and *Congressional Representatives* how MMA's cuts will impact patient access to care at your practice. *Congress* needs to hear your stories, both directly and through the media. Please use the ASCO's summary of the key findings as a guide for drafting letters to your local media outlets and in speaking to your *Members of Congress*. Contact Jenny Heumann in ASCO's *Communications Department* at (703) 519-1427 or heumannj@asco.org for help contacting your local media outlet.

- Seventeen medical associations, including ASCO, joined in sending a letter September 13th to CMS, expressing deep concern about the lack of information in the proposed rule on Medicare drug payments scheduled to go into effect in 2005. As first-quarter drug payments for 2005 will be based on 2004 third-quarter ASP data, the letter urges CMS to provide 2005 drug payments as

soon as possible so that physicians can decide on the best course of action for their patients.

Visit 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.]

ANCO has joined other specialty societies and the CMA in supporting the campaign to affirm the *Health Insurance Act* (SB2; Prop 72) and oppose attempts to repeal this law on the November 2004 ballot. ANCO endorses the *California Stem Cell Research & Cures Initiative* (Prop 71) on November's ballot and encourages all its members to support this campaign. This initiative will authorize low-interest, tax-free bonds to fund stem cell research in California. ANCO endorses the *California Tobacco Control Alliance's* public action campaign entitled *Smoking Cessation Benefits Everyone* and encourages all its members to support this campaign by signing the letter at www.cessationbenefitseveryone.org.

The CMA's 8th *Annual Leadership Academy* will take place in La Quinta from November 19th-21st. The theme for this year's *Academy* is *Acceleration: Access, Quality, and Cost in the Era of Consumerism*. Additional information is available at www.cmanet.org/leadership.

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.]

The *Medicare B Resource* (September 2004) is available online at www.medicarenhic.com/providers/news/mbr_sept04.pdf.

Visit www.medicarenhic.com/whats_new/whats_new.shtml to learn **the latest information** (updated weekly) **from NHIC/Medicare**. Relevant information is summarized in ANCO's WebLog (at www.anco-online.org/news.html; under California News).

The most recent *NHIC/Medicare Medicare Advisory Forum* (MAF) teleconference took place on September 14th. Among the items most relevant to oncology were:

- Elimination of grace periods for ICD-9-CM codes for dates of service on and after October 1st, and for CPT and HCPCS codes for dates of service on and after January 1st, 2005. Claims with dates of service on and after these dates must be submitted with 2005 codes.
- The Medicare *Physician Fee Schedule* will be mailed to providers in mid-November via CD-ROM and will include two years of the *Medicare B Resource*.
- Item 11 of the CMS 1500 claim form is required for Medicare billing. If the beneficiary does not have secondary insurance, then the word NONE should be placed in item 11, as acknowledgment that a good faith effort to attain the information was made.

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 14th, at The Claremont Resort in Oakland, a distinguished faculty from ANCO's Institutional Members—including Steven E. Coutre, M.D., *Stanford*, George A. Fisher, M.D., Ph.D., *Stanford*, Primo N. Lara, Jr., M.D., *UC Davis*, Hope S. Rugo, M.D., *UC San Francisco*, and Heather Wakelee, M.D., *Stanford*—presented ANCO's annual *ASCO Highlights 2004* before an audience of approximately 220 physicians, nurses, and others. *ASCO Highlights 2004* was accredited by ASCO and supported by numerous organizations (see acknowledgment box). A copy of the syllabus may be obtained from the ASCO

office; an on-demand webcast of the program will be available at www.anco-online.org in the near future.

ANCO's 2004 Annual Meeting

ANCO will hold its 2004 *Annual Meeting* from Friday evening, October 1st, through Sunday morning, October 3rd 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 *Clinical Practice Committee*, on national legislative/ regulatory issues.
- Senator Deborah Ortiz, *Chair*, California State Senate Health Committee, & Jack Lewin, M.D., *Vice President*, CMA, on California legislative/regulatory issues.
- Joseph S. Bailes, M.D., Peter D. Eisenberg, M.D., Gerald N. Rogan, M.D., Joseph V. Simone, M.D., and Kirk Stapleton, 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.
- 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.

Advances in the Treatment of Breast Cancer

On Tuesday evening, October 19th, Nancy Davidson, M.D., *Johns Hopkins University Medical Center*, will help ANCO recognize *Breast Cancer*

Awareness Month with a presentation on advances in the treatment of breast cancer. This program will take place at the Hotel Nikko in San Francisco. *Novartis Oncology* is sponsoring this meeting. A copy of the meeting announcement was mailed in mid-September.

Additional Education Meetings

Other meetings of interest to ANCO member practices are:

October 9th

Oncology Care Update

San Francisco Bay Area Oncology Nursing Society
South San Francisco

October 17-20th

24th Annual Nurses Symposium

Scripps Cancer Center
San Diego

October 18-20th

2004 Fall Conference

California Hospice Foundation
Las Vegas, NV

October 28th

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**. It features the following:

- A general description of the *Association* and its activities.

- ANCO's advocacy information, educational meeting announcements and materials, publications, and WebLog.
- Links to affiliated organizations and updated physician, nurse, manager, and patient resources.

The WebLog archives important news for oncology practices posted on an almost daily basis. Among the additional news items posted at www.anco-online.org/news/index.html since the last edition of the *ANCO FAX News* are:

- ASCO's e-News, MMA Special Alert, and *MMA Today*
- HIPAA Tip: Performing a Risk Analysis

• NHIC/Medicare Website Updates

ANCO urges its members to bookmark www.anco-online.org (or subscribe to www.anco-online.org/news/rss.xml using your favorite news reader) 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); has a ListServ for the exchange of general/administrative and clinical information; and, has a group purchasing organization (GPO).

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

ANCO thanks

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

for supporting clinical and professional education.

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 ListServes to communicate with colleagues about issues of importance to oncology practices by sending their e-mail addresses to the ANCO office.

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.

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

- *Fall Conference 2004*, October 9th, Santa Monica, will explore the issues faced by community based oncology practices in the coming years, and equip attendees with practical, clinical tools and reimbursement strategies that can be implemented in their own practice.

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. **HOLN recently announced changes (i.e., product, rebate, and/or pricing)** for *Mayne* contracts.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Letter from the ANCO President

[The September 17th] front page of the *Wall Street Journal* featured an article entitled *To Get Doctors to Do Better, Health Plans Try Cash Bonuses* on a new trend in health insurance payments to California physicians that is known as *Pay for Performance*. The sums of money at stake are significant, as the article details.

ANCO's 2004 *Annual Meeting* in Monterey October 1st-3rd will devote considerable time to this issue. ASCO and NCI efforts to seize the initiative in setting definitions of quality cancer care will be presented, and there will be talks on how Medicare and private payers plan to implement *Pay for Performance* concepts in cancer care.

The ANCO *Board of Directors* has designed the meeting's agenda to be timely and relevant to the survival of community oncology practices, and we look forward to meeting with you in Monterey.

Board of Directors

The ANCO *Board of Directors* met on September 14th. Among the issues discussed and/or acted upon were:

- National and California legislative/regulatory issues, including MMA; the status of the *California Cancer Political Action Committee*; and, public and private payer issue updates.
- *ASCO Highlights 2004, Annual Meeting, San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium Highlights 2004, and ASH Highlights 2004* plans.
- Distribution of *Practical Tips for the Practicing Oncologist* (3rd Edition).
- Plans for a *Finance Committee* teleconference.

Contact the ANCO office for additional information on any of these items.

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 October 3rd. 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
Genentech BioOncology
Genitope Corporation • Genomic Health
Genta • GlaxoSmithKline
International Oncology Network
Lash Group Healthcare Consultants
Ligand Pharmaceuticals, Lilly Oncology
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.

Schering-Plough Oncology informs ANCO that the new diluent supplied with INTRON A powder for injection is sterile water for injection and does not contain a preservative. After reconstitution and withdrawal of a single dose, the vial and remaining contents must be discarded and there are new storage requirements for the reconstituted product.

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*

ANCO members can obtain information about our Institutional Member's clinical trials via www.anco-online.org/advocacy.html. *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. Learn more about this project at www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/cancer/clinical_trials/bigc/ where you can download ANCO's patient education brochure on SB37, California's law requiring the coverage of routine care costs for patients enrolled in clinical trials. Finally, the NCI has just released a new *Clinical Trials Education Series* to help recruit patients available from (800) 4-CANCER or www.cancer.gov/publications.

The *Stanford University Division of Gynecologic Oncology* has opened a new anti-angiogenesis clinical trial (*A Phase IIIA Pilot Study of CC5013 in Women with Recurrent or Persistent Ovarian, Fallopian Tube, or Primary Peritoneal Carcinoma*). Please contact Terri Donohoe, R.N., *Clinical Research Nurse Coordinator*, at (650) 724-3155 or Nelson Teng, M.D., Ph.D., at (650) 498-8080 for inclusion/exclusion criteria and additional information; or, visit cancertrials.stanford.edu.

Stanford's 9th *Biennial National Symposium on Hematopoietic Cell Transplantation* takes place at Stanford on September 30th. The presenter is Robert S. Negrin, M.D. For more information, visit med.stanford.edu/seminars/details-documents.jsp?semid=2431.

Stanford's *Anal Cancer: Prevention, Diagnosis, and Treatment* takes place at Stanford on October 28th. The presenter is Mark L. Welton, M.D. For more information, visit med.stanford.edu/seminars/details-documents.jsp?semid=2415.

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

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
- www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/cme/Confrnce/Confrnce.htm

- www.cme.ucsf.edu/cme/index.aspx?Display=Date

Publications, Services, & Surveys

ANCO has purchased bulk copies of ASCO's *Practical Tips for the Practicing Oncologist* (3rd edition) for distribution to all member practices. One copy of *Practical Tips* was mailed to each member practice address on September 20th. *Practical Tips* answers the most commonly asked questions about coding, coverage. Additional copies may be purchased directly from the ASCO *Publications Department* at (888) 273-3508.

Members may still enroll in ANCO's *DIMA Practice Preparedness Survey*, consisting of the hands-on help of two expert reimbursement and practice management consultants via a one-day practice site visit designed to assess and improve the financial health of your practice. Member practices and ANCO share the cost of the site visit. Contact the ANCO office for additional information.

Locums Tenens

[*Editor's Note:* This article was contributed by Ben Brown, *CompHealth*, a provider of healthcare recruiting and staffing services, including *locum tenens*, with more than 10 years experience working with medical oncology practices. For more information about *CompHealth*, visit www.comphealth.com, or call/e-mail Ben Brown, at (888) 207-5999/bbrown@comphealth.com.]

Taken from the Latin term "to hold the place of, to substitute for," *locum tenens* means a temporary physician. *Locum tenens* benefits both physicians and healthcare organizations by using supplemental healthcare professionals as a strategic way to meet business goals and patient needs. Temporary medical oncologists can be used for a variety of reasons—to fill in for an absent staff member, to cover while physicians attend CME courses, to supplement regular staff during busy times, or to staff new facilities while permanent providers are recruited. Using *locum tenens* has become an accepted and viable option for large and small facilities to better meet the needs of patients counting on the highest level of service available.