

ANCO FAX News

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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 22nd.

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.]

José Luis González, ANCO *Executive Director*, attended ACCC's 21st *National Oncology Economics Conference* entitled *Oncology Economics: How to Survive in 2005*, specifically their legislative/regulatory update session. Highlights follow:

- CMS's oral drug demonstration project continues to accept applications and provides physicians an opportunity to

**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.

become patient advocates in an altruistic fashion.

- CMS is considering changes in how it implements off-label coverage provisions of Federal law and issuing conflicting statements on what changes may be implemented.
- The final 2005 *Medicare Physician Fee Schedule* will be published in November, will contain 1Q05 drug reimbursement allowances, and will announce which AMA CPT/RUC drug administration coding recommendations were accepted.
- A skeptical *Congressional* leadership will await data from after implementation of MMA on January 1st before considering legislative fixes.
- Expense control and revenue enhancement; collaboration, diversification, and expansion; leading and managing change effectively; and, focusing on quality will be the hallmarks of survival.

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's *Clinical Practice Committee* and *State/Regional Affiliates* teleconferenced on Thursday, October 7th. Highlights include:

☞ *Congress* adjourns on Saturday, October 9th, and will reconvene in late November for a lame-duck session. HR5144 (Norwood) now has 30 cosponsors.

☞ ASCO and others met with the *Congressional* leadership and *Committee Chairs* earlier this week. They informed ASCO that they have asked CMS to release drug pricing and coding changes as early as possible.

☞ The CMS *Administrator* continues to meet with ASCO with regard to ASCO's data collection efforts and drug pricing available to private practice physicians.

☞ MedPAC has started to call practices as part of their MMA mandated study. ASCO urges contacted practices to call them to prepare for their MedPAC interaction.

- ASCO and ANCO ask all members to contact their *Congressional Representatives* and *Senators* to urge them to co-sponsor HR5144, the *Cancer Care Preservation Act of 2004*, and S2587, the *Ensuring Quality and Access to Cancer Act of 2004*. *Senator Boxer* and *Representatives Capps* and *Lantos* (of California) have already cosponsored. Additional cosponsors are needed!
- ASCO's comments on the proposed 2005 *Medicare Physician Fee Schedule* were submitted on September 24th and can be downloaded from the ANCO website.

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.

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. Weekly updates are posted on ANCO's WebLog (at www.anco-online.org/news/index.html; under California News).

The next *NHIC/Medicare Advisory Forum* (MAF) teleconference takes place on a date to be determined; the next *NHIC/Medicare Carrier Advisory Committee* (CAC) meeting takes place in Los Angeles on October 20th; 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.]

ASCO Highlights 2004

Did you miss ANCO's *ASCO Highlights 2004* program? A limited number of syllabuses are available from the ASCO office. The *PowerPoint* presentations may be downloaded from the ANCO website. And, an on-demand webcast of the program (or virtual meeting) is now available at www.anco-online.org/asco.html.

ANCO's 2004 Annual Meeting

ANCO held its 2004 *Annual Meeting* from Friday evening, October 1st, through Sunday morning, October 3rd at the Hyatt Regency Monterey. Approximately 30% of all ANCO member practices were represented by at least one physician, nurse manager, or practice manager—many by all three. A distinguished national and local faculty presented the latest national and statewide legislative and regulatory information, quality cancer care information, and described practice management techniques and information technology to meet the challenges faced by medical oncology practice in 2005 and beyond. The ANCO 2004 *Annual Meeting* was accredited

by ASCO for 9 CEUs. A limited number of syllabuses are available from the ANCO office and *PowerPoint* presentations may be downloaded from the ANCO website.

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 17-20th
24th Annual Nurses Symposium
Scripps Cancer Center
San Diego

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

for supporting clinical and professional education.

October 28th

Practice Performance: Maintaining the Health of Your Patients and Your Practice

Innovative Medical Communications
San Francisco

November 11th

Oncology Payer Relationships: Customizing Effective Solutions

Innovative Medical Communications
Santa Monica

November 12-14th

North American Educational Forum on Lymphoma
Lymphoma Research Foundation & Lymphoma Foundation Canada
San Francisco

November 18-19th

Health Care Information Technology 2004: Improving Chronic Disease Care in California
California HealthCare Foundation & Center for Health Research, UC Berkeley
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*
- CMA Updates on CIGNA Settlement
- HIPAA Tips:
Identity Theft in the Computer Age
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 software; e.g., RssReader for Windows or NetNewsWire for Macintosh) 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 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.

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 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

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

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 November 11th. 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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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.

RxHope has been contracted by California to distribute Taxol to indigent patients at no cost as part of the **Taxol Settlement Program**. The application process can be completed via telephone or at www.RxHope.com. After an application is completed a secure login account is created, giving the prescriber the ability to track current orders, reapply, and place new orders for other patients. A special account is available to accommodate large clinics and hospitals by

contacting RxHope via email at Taxol@rxhope.com. Any doctor, clinic, or hospital may apply for this free assistance. Please feel free to contact RxHope at (800) 589-0834 with any questions.

As previously reported (*ANCO FAX News* dated September 10th), CMS has published Change Request #3419 which details an **increase in the 2004 Medicare physician office reimbursement rate for Rituxan**. Providers must resubmit claims dating back to April 1st to receive a retroactive reimbursement adjustment. According to NHIC/Medicare, providers may do one of two things:

1. Submit the remittance advices with the claims in question identified, along with a request to adjust to the recently published allowable amounts, or
2. Submit a list that contains the beneficiary name, HIC number, ICN number, and date of service, along with a request to adjust the procedure code to be corrected to the recently published allowable amounts, to
Medicare Written Inquiries
Post Office Box 2006
Chico, CA 95927-2006

Pfizer Oncology has announced a 4% decrease in the price of Ellence effective October 5th. The purpose of the price decrease is to maintain patient access to Ellence.

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 I/IIA 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.

UCD's Design Museum's *The Art of Healing Breast Cancer: A Union of Science and Design* is an exhibition intended to create an avenue for health education through a union of science and design. A reception and panel discussion will be held on Sunday, October 17th at 1PM. For more information, visit designmuseum.ucdavis.edu.

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* takes place in Sacramento on October 30th.

UCSF's *2nd Annual Pan Pacific Lung Cancer* takes place in Hong Kong on November 6-8th. The course chairs are David M. Jablons, M.D., and Tony Mok, M.D. Visit cme.ucsf.edu/calendar/CourseDetail.asp?CourseNumber=MMJ05003 for more information.

Stanford's *Evolution of Cancer Therapy: From Pathways to Patients* takes place at Stanford on

November 11th. The presenters are from Stanford, UCLA, UCSF, NIH, Spectros, and Power3 Medical. For more information, visit med.stanford.edu/seminars/details-documents.jsp?semid=2744.

The *6th Annual UCD/UCSF Thoracic Oncology Conference* takes place in San Francisco on November 13th. The course chairs are David M. Jablons, M.D., and David Gandara, M.D.. Visit cme.ucsf.edu/calendar/CourseDetail.asp?CourseNumber=MSU05004 for more information.

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

Publications, Services, & Surveys

Members may still **enroll in ANCO's MMA 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.