

# 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](mailto:jlgonzalez@aol.com)  
[www.anco-online.org](http://www.anco-online.org) • [www.californiaoncology.org](http://www.californiaoncology.org)

Vol. 3, No. 6

March 26<sup>th</sup>, 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, April 9<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; [jlgonzalez@aol.com](mailto: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.]

José Luis González, *ANCO Executive Director*, attended the ACCC's 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting—*Oncology at the Crossroads: Assuring Excellence and Access to Care* in Washington, D.C., on March 18<sup>th</sup>. Among the highlights:

- Despite the continuing efforts by all interested parties, the outlook for a legislative technical correction to the *Medicare Prescription Drug*,

**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.

*Improvement, and Modernization Act (DIMA)* is dim.

- Official DIMA information from Medicare can be accessed at [www.cms.hhs.gov/mmu/default.asp](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/mmu/default.asp).
- Patient access to care problems should be reported by patients directly to Medicare at 1-800-Medicare (in addition to [www.accesswatch.org](http://www.accesswatch.org); see *ANCO FAX News*, Vol. 3, No.5).
- Drug reimbursement for 2005 based on Average Sales Price (ASP) is not likely to be released until the fourth quarter of 2004.
- Billing for all performed services is more important than ever.

ACCC's *Center for Provider Education* is pleased to announce a series of regional educational sessions entitled *Life in the New Medicare Era: Coding, Billing, and Management for Medical Oncology Practices*. Designed for physicians, practice managers, and coders/billers, these five-hour practical and hands-on sessions will explore the primary components of oncology billing and how Medicare reform impacts this process and help oncology practices operate more efficiently and effectively. A San Francisco meeting will take place on Tuesday, May 11<sup>th</sup>. For more information and to register online, visit [www.accc-cancer.org/education](http://www.accc-cancer.org/education).

### ***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** introduced *Senate Joint Resolution (SJR) 25* asking Congress to correct DIMA, including its cancer care provisions, on March 8<sup>th</sup>. Currently, SJR25 is in the *Senate Health and Human Services Committee*. ANCO urges its members to contact their *State Assemblymembers* and *Senators* in support of SJR25.

ANCO is also actively involved (see position) with the following pieces of legislation among others:

- Opposes AB2125 (Levine) requiring a physician to indicate the patient's diagnosis on each prescription and to include this information on the container's label.
- Opposes AB2588 (Reyes) prohibiting a physician from disclosing medical information to any third-party for the purpose of medical data processing or medical record transcription.
- Opposes AB2626 (Plescia) removing the requirement of a physician to review, countersign, and date the medical records of patients cared for by a physician assistant.
- Supports AB2783 (Berg) requiring coverage for the treatment of chronic pain to continue as long as the treatment is effective.
- Supports AB2876 (Calderon) specifying that the duration of covered services for a terminal illness may exceed 12 months.

Join ANCO (and MOASC) at CMA's *Legislative Leadership Day* in Sacramento on April 28<sup>th</sup>. To RSVP, call or e-mail CMA at (916) 444-5532 or [legday@cmanet.org](mailto:legday@cmanet.org) and let them know you want to be seated with the ANCO/MOASC (oncology) delegation.

CMA's all new 2004 *California Physician's Legal Handbook* at over 4,000 pages is even more comprehensive than prior editions and extensively indexed by subject, law, website, form, and court case. The *Handbook* answers the legal questions most frequently asked by physicians. It includes practical summaries of California and federal laws as well as sample forms and letters, and the actual text of the laws of greatest interest to physicians. To order your copy, see the advertisement attached at the end of this edition of the *ANCO FAX News*.

## 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.

The *Medicare B Resource* (March 2004) is now available online at [www.medicarenhic.com/news/provider\\_news/ca-mbr/04-1.pdf](http://www.medicarenhic.com/news/provider_news/ca-mbr/04-1.pdf).

The most recent *NHIC/Medicare Medicare Advisory Forum* (MAF) meeting took place via teleconference on March 16<sup>th</sup>. Among the topics discussed were:

- Spring 2004 workshops in Northern California (see [www.medicarenhic.com/cal\\_prov/seminars.shtml](http://www.medicarenhic.com/cal_prov/seminars.shtml)).
- Medicare's July 1<sup>st</sup> modification of its HIPAA contingency plan to allow submission of non-compliant electronic claims but delay payment by thirteen (13) additional days.
- A change in the name, format, and content of *Local Medical Review Policies* (LMRPs) to *Local Coverage Determinations* (LCDs). LCDs will no longer include billing information, which will be provided via website and *Resource* articles.
- Provider enrollment and database management updates resulting in processing delays.

The next *NHIC/Medicare Advisory Forum* (MAF) teleconference takes place on June 15<sup>th</sup>; the next *NHIC/Medicare Carrier Advisory Committee* (CAC) meeting takes place in Los Angeles on April 21<sup>st</sup>; the next ANCO•MOASC meeting with NHIC/Medicare will take place at a date and location to be determined.

### ANCO thanks

biogenIDEC, Cell Therapeutics,  
Genentech BioOncology, Genta,  
Novartis Oncology, & Wyeth Oncology

for supporting clinical and professional education.

## EDUCATION

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

### *Review of the American Society of Hematology (ASH) 2003 Annual Meeting*

On Tuesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, Charles Linker, M.D., Tom Martin, M.D., and Willis Navarro, M.D., *UC San Francisco*, reviewed the most clinically relevant studies presented at the *ASH Annual Meeting*. This meeting took place at The Claremont Resort, Oakland, before an audience of approximately 70 physicians, nurses, and others. *UC San Francisco* accredited this program for two (2) continuing education units. *biogenIDEC*, *Cell Therapeutics*, *Genentech BioOncology*, *Genta*, *Novartis Oncology*, and *Wyeth Oncology* supported this meeting.

### *Expanding Medical Oncology Practice in a New Environment: An Evolution to Individualized Medicine*

On Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons, April 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, in Sacramento and San Francisco, Lawrence Piro, M.D., will present a series of meetings for

physicians, nurses, and practice managers on how to diversify service and product lines in medical oncology practices. *biogenIDEC* is sponsoring these meetings. Announcements were mailed in mid March.

### *Additional Education Meetings*

Other meetings of interest to ANCO member practices are:

March 28<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>

*2004 Administrators in Oncology-Hematology Assembly (AOHA) Conference*

Medical Group Management Association  
San Diego

March 31<sup>st</sup>

*Breast Cancer in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Information for the Managed Care Pharmacist*

Discovery International  
San Francisco

April 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>

*Focus on Myeloma and Plasma Cell Disorders*

Imedex

Los Angeles

(Please note: Grants are still available for residents and fellows for this conference.

For more information, visit [www.imedex.com/announcements/plasmacell04.html](http://www.imedex.com/announcements/plasmacell04.html), or contact Heather Drew at (770) 751-7332.)

April 29<sup>th</sup>-May 2<sup>nd</sup>

*29<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress—The Ride of Your Life!*

Oncology Nursing Society

Anaheim

May 4-7<sup>th</sup>

*2004 Spring Conference*

California Hospice Foundation

San José

May 11<sup>th</sup>

*Life in the New Medicare Era: Coding, Billing, and Management for Medical Oncology Practices*

Association of Community Cancer Centers

San Francisco

May 15<sup>th</sup>

*Emerging Strategies for Cancer Therapy*

University of California, San Francisco

San Francisco

June 5-8<sup>th</sup>

*40<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting*

American Society of Clinical Oncology

New Orleans, LA

June 10-11<sup>th</sup>

*Pain and End-of-Life Care*

University of California, San Francisco

San Francisco

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

- A weblog with important news for oncology practices.
- Links to affiliated organizations.
- A general description of the *Association* and its activities.
- ANCO's publications, advocacy information, and educational meeting announcements and materials.

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).

### *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*. A complete current (as of February 2004) price list of HOLN contracted products is available from the ANCO office or online at [www.holn.org](http://www.holn.org).

## 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:

## ASSOCIATION NEWS

### *Board of Directors*

The ANCO *Board of Directors* met on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. Among the issues discussed and/or acted upon were:

- National and California legislative/regulatory issues, including relationships between ASCO and the

*Community Oncology Alliance (COA)* and ANCO's role in the *California Medical Association*.

- *ASH and ASCO Highlights*, and the *Annual Meeting* agenda.
- Additional membership benefits, including a consultancy service, template patient letters, and group purchasing activities.
- ANCO's activities at the *ASCO National Meeting* in New Orleans.
- ANCO's potential role in clinical trials.
- An updated FY2004 budget.

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 serve the membership. *Board* meetings are open to the membership. The **next regularly scheduled ANCO Board of Directors teleconference** will take place on May 13<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 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**

**Gerald E. Gibbs, M.D.**

405 Southeast 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Hillsboro, OR 97123-4518

*Contacts:* *Shelie Gibbs*  
*Wendy Wilson, R.N.*  
*Telephone:* (503) 640-3687  
*FAX:* (503) 640-3688

### **NURSE & OFFICE MANAGERS**

**Shelie Gibbs, M.D.**

405 Southeast 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Hillsboro, OR 97123-4518  
*Telephone:* (503) 640-3687  
*FAX:* (503) 640-3688  
*sheliehg@hillsboro-onc.com*

**Wendy Wilson, R.N.**

405 Southeast 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Hillsboro, OR 97123-4518  
*Telephone:* (503) 640-3687  
*FAX:* (503) 640-3688

### **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 • Aventis*  
*Bayer Biologicals • Berlex Laboratories*  
*biogenIDEC*  
*Bristol-Myers Squibb Oncology*  
*Cell Therapeutics • Chiron Corporation*  
*Eli Lilly and Company*  
*Genentech BioOncology • Genomic Health*  
*Genta • Glaxo SmithKline • IMPATH*  
*International Oncology Network*  
*LashGroup/Documedics*  
*Ligand Pharmaceuticals*  
*MedImmune Oncology • MGI Pharma*  
*Millennium • National Oncology Alliance*  
*Novartis Oncology • Oncology Supply*  
*Oncology Therapeutics Network*  
*Oncotech • Ortho Biotech*  
*Pfizer Oncology • Roche Oncology*  
*Sanofi-Synthelabo*  
*Schering Oncology/Biotech*  
*SuperGen • US Oncology • Wyeth Oncology*

We especially wish to thank and welcome *Genomic Health*, *Genta*, and *Schering Oncology/Biotech* as new Corporate Members in 2004. Members are encouraged to provide the

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

**Bristol-Myers Squibb Oncology's AccessMed program can answer reimbursement-related questions about the recently approved *Erbix* via (888) Erbitux.**

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

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 encourages its members to participate in our Institutional Member's clinical trials programs** which can be accessed via [www.anco-online.org/advocacy.html](http://www.anco-online.org/advocacy.html).

***Emerging Strategies for Cancer Therapy*** takes place in San Francisco on May 15<sup>th</sup>. Presented by the *University of California, San Francisco*, this course is designed to educate physicians and other health care providers about inhibitors of the epidermal growth factor (EGF) family of receptors and agents that block vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF)-mediated angiogenesis. Attendees will learn the basic biology underlying these novel therapeutic approaches and the potential differences between small molecule receptor tyrosine kinase inhibitors and antibody-based strategies. The course *Chairs* are Emily Bergsland, M.D., Robert Ignoffo, Pharm.D., Thierry Jahan, M.D., Brian Rini, M.D., Hope Rugo, M.D., and Alan Venook, M.D., *UCSF*. Visit [cme.ucsf.edu/calendar/CourseDetail.asp?CourseNumber=DMH04414](http://cme.ucsf.edu/calendar/CourseDetail.asp?CourseNumber=DMH04414) for more information.

***Pain and End-of-Life Care*** takes place in San Francisco on June 10-11<sup>th</sup>. 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. As a result of a new California law, AB487, beginning in 2002 California physicians must take 12 hours of CME in pain and palliative care. This course is developed to meet these new CME

requirements. Visit [cme.ucsf.edu/calendar/CourseDetail.asp?CourseNumber=DMM04462](http://cme.ucsf.edu/calendar/CourseDetail.asp?CourseNumber=DMM04462) for more information.

The *American Medical Association* (AMA) also offers a 12-hour **online CME course in pain management**. It is available at [www.ama-cmeonline.com](http://www.ama-cmeonline.com).

ANCO also endorses the CMA's ***Pain Palliation and Politics: Pain Management and End-of-Life Care in California's Regulatory Environment*** programs. Watch for additional details on location(s) and date(s) for 2004.

### ***Publications & Surveys***

Because you need to know how your patients feel about your systems, services and performance, ANCO and MOASC are using our combined strength to offer you a reliable **patient satisfaction survey** at a steep discount. We encourage all practices to participate. ANCO and MOASC will fund the set-up fee so that our members can participate for a discounted rate of \$70 for each physician. Contact the ANCO office to participate in the Patient Satisfaction Survey for 2004.

### ***Membership Dues for 2004***

**Second notices of membership renewal were mailed in mid February 2004. Return your 2004 membership dues to ANCO at your earliest convenience.** 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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. All members of a practice should join ANCO. 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!**