

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 member practices (via FAX) and corporate member contacts (via e-mail). The next regular *ANCO FAX News* will be published on April 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.

**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):

- ASCO urges member cooperation with two CMS studies on drug purchasing. The first is a CMS/*Abt Associates* study to

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.

determine whether prices paid by large volume purchasers are representative of the prices available to prudent physicians. The second is an OIG study to review the ability of oncology/hematology providers to buy drugs at 106% of average sales price (ASP).

- CMS published the 2Q05 ASPs at www.cms.hhs.gov/providers/drugs/asp.asp#pricing. ASCO's chart comparing 2Q05 and 1Q05 ASPs is available via www.anco-online.org/mma.html.

- CMS accepted the CPT *Editorial Panel's* recommendation regarding **IV versus push infusions**; that is, that an infusion of 15 minutes or less should be reported as an IV push, and infusions lasting longer than 15 minutes should be reported as an infusion. CMS will issue instructions to local carriers in the near future.

- CMS confirmed to ASCO that **Medigap insurers are required to cover the 20% beneficiary copay for the demonstration project**. ASCO solicits input from members on the following questions:

1. Are you aware of any Medigap plans that have denied payment for the 20% beneficiary copay associated with the G codes for the cancer care demonstration project?

2. Are you aware of any Medigap plans that have denied payment for the 20% beneficiary copay associated with the G codes for the new drug administration services?

If so, provide the name of the Medigap insurer and any explanation the insurer has provided for these denials. Please send your responses to ASCO at practice@asco.org and they will provide CMS with information about any problems with coverage of beneficiary copays by Medigap plans.

- ASCO's analysis of CMS's proposed **Competitive Acquisition Program (CAP)** for Part B drugs is available at www.anco-online.org/mma.html.

- ASCO's **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)** have been updated to reflect local carrier implementation of drug administration and demonstration project G codes and can be downloaded at www.anco-online.org/mma.html.

- ASCO's **ASP Spreadsheet Tool & Guide** (available at www.anco-online.org/mma.html) allows you to analyze the impact of the 2Q05 Medicare drug allowables on your practice. It is very important that you report your actual prices to ASCO by sending a copy of your completed spreadsheet to aspspreadsheet@asco.org.

Visit www.asco.org/mma, www.anco-online.org/mma.html, or call/e-mail ASCO's billing and coding hotline at (703) 299-1054/practice@asco.org for up-to-date information on changes in coding for drug administration services, as well as billing and payments for drugs. And, **join ASCO's Grassroots Advocacy Network** at www.asco.org/grassroots_survey.

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.]

Noteware Government Relations represents **ANCO (and MOASC) in Sacramento**. They report:

- ANCO (and MOASC) participated in CMA's annual *Legislative Leadership Day* on April 6th which brings together more than 500 physicians to review major legislative issues affecting patients and physicians in California. While in Sacramento, ANCO had meetings and discussed its opposition with the authors of two high-profile pieces of legislation.
- ANCO met with *Senator Liz Figueroa* to discuss SB583 that would allow physicians (and others) to treat cancer exclusively with complementary and

alternative medicine. This bill is set for hearing on April 18th.

- ANCO and MOASC also met with a co-author AB654 that would allow physician-assisted suicide.

Assemblymember Levine and ANCO/MOASC discussed the merits of their positions on this hotly debated issue. Robert S. Miller, M.D., *Chair, ANCO Legislative/Regulatory Committee*, will represent medical oncology and testify at a hearing in the *Assembly Judiciary Committee* on April 12th.

Contact the ANCO office for ANCO's positions on additional legislation.

ANCO and MOASC have agreed to form the ***California Oncology Political Action Committee*** or CalCancerPAC. Organizational steps have been completed and ANCO and MOASC expect to launch fund-raising efforts for CalCancerPAC in the near future. CalCancerPAC's goal will be to support candidates and issues sensitive to the needs of oncologists and their patients.

CMA's ***Pain, Palliation, and Politics: Pain Management and End-of-Life Care in California's Regulatory Environment*** takes place at the San Francisco Airport Marriott Hotel on September 9-10th. Additional information is available at www.cmanet.org (select Conferences, Meetings, Seminars). In addition, CMA and the ***University of California, San Diego***, have launched a unique case-based CME program on DVD that physicians can use to receive their state-mandated 12 hours of Category I CME for pain medicine and end-of-life care. The program, entitled ***Pain Management: A Case-Based CME Program for Physicians***, provides specific information on the most common pain syndromes. Contact UCSD at (888) 229-6263 for more information.

Physicians can now order the 2005 ***California Physician's Legal Handbook*** (CPLH). This manual is published annually by CMA's *Center for Legal Affairs* and answers the legal questions most frequently asked by physicians. It can be purchased as a six-volume, 4,000-page print edition or an interactive CD-ROM. The *Handbook* has been completely updated for 2005 to reflect new laws, court decisions, and other

developments in the health care system. It includes practical summaries of state and federal laws, the text of laws where necessary, and useful forms. The CD-ROM offers all of the content of the print version, plus many enhancements, including fully searchable content, interactive forms and sample letters you can customize easily with your computer's word-processing program, and hyperlinks that let you navigate within the CD-ROM and onto the Internet for more information about cited court cases. Contact CMA's legal information line at (415) 882-5144 for more information.

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*** (March 2005) is available online at www.medicarenhic.com/news/provider_news/mbr_mar05.pdf.

Effective July 1st, CMS and NHIC/Medicare will begin to implement a process by which **non-HIPAA compliant (aka "paper") claims could be denied for providers who do not meet with a waiver or an exception**. The details of this compliance are provided in the following MedLearn Matters article available at www.cms.hhs.gov/medlearn/matters/mmarticles/2005/MM3440.pdf. Please note that one of the waivers/exceptions to this compliance is for physicians with fewer than ten (10) FTEs that bill a Medicare carrier.

Visit www.medicarenhic.com/whats_new/whats_new.shtml to learn the latest information (updated weekly) from NHIC/Medicare. Weekly updates are also posted on ANCO's WebLog (at www.anco-online.org/news/index.html; under California News).

With regard to NHIC/Medicare and MMA in California, here is a summary of recent communications between the carrier and ANCO:

- Medicare claims must be submitted according to Medicare rules regardless of whether it is a primary or secondary claim. It may be necessary for providers to make changes to claims/remittances from primary non-Medicare payers so

they can be properly processed under Medicare rules.

- With regard to claims for Vidaza, the drug's administration should be billed using drug administration codes and modifier -76 along with the drug's J-code and modifier -59 with the text "second injection" following the drug description in item 19 or the comments field. If both injections of Vidaza are billed on the same claim, then offices should enter the time each injection is administered to help avoid confusion. Since this drug uses J9999, the drug description should include the drug name, base dosage as identified on the packaging (the units field would represent multiples of the base dosage), and the price from the drug distributor to the practice.

ANCO recently met with officials of DHS/MediCal who would like to know about ANCO member practice experience with the DHS/MediCal system.
Specifically:

1. What DHS/MediCal claims processing and coverage issues interfere with beneficiary access to cancer care?
2. Is DHS/MediCal paying the co-insurance on Medicare drug claims? DHS/Medical will pay the 20% co-insurance up to MediCal's maximum allowable cost, whichever is less.

If you provide information regarding items 1 and 2 above, then please estimate the proportion of your patient population that is covered by DHS/MediCal. The EDS training team at (800) 541-5555 is a resource to help practices with DHS/MediCal claims processing problems.

EDUCATION

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

MMA in California & ASCO's Practice Management Curriculum

On Wednesday, March 30th, and Thursday, March 31st, at the San José Fairmont and Sacramento Hyatt Regency, respectively, ANCO hosted a meeting discussing *MMA in California & ASCO's Practice Management Curriculum*. Topics discussed include strategies to overcome Medicare coding and documentation challenges in 2005, NHIC/Medicare's perspective on the implementation of MMA in Northern California, and ASCO's *Practice Management Curriculum* designed to empower oncology practices with practical strategies for adapting to the changing

Medicare environment, running a successful practice, and considering growth opportunities. ANCO acknowledges the support of *AMGEN, Genentech BioOncology, Lilly Oncology, MGI Pharma, National Oncology Alliance, Novartis Oncology, Therapeutics*

Network/Onmark, and Pfizer Oncology in making these meetings possible. Meeting materials are available for download at www.anco-online.org/mmamc.html.

ANCO Audio Conference on 2Q05 ASPs and CMS's Proposed Competitive Acquisition Program (CAP)

ANCO will host another audio conference on April 13th at 12PM to discuss the 2Q05 ASPs and CMS's proposed *Competitive Acquisition Program (CAP)*. An announcement for this audio conference was FAXed to all ANCO member practices last week and is attached to this issue of the *ANCO FAX News*.

ANCO thanks

AMGEN, Genentech BioOncology, Lilly Oncology
MGI Pharma, National Oncology Alliance, Novartis Oncology,
Oncology Therapeutics Network/Onmark, & Pfizer Oncology

for supporting clinical and professional education.

SAVE THE DATE ASCO's Best of ASCO

On Friday and Saturday, June 17-18th, ASCO brings its annual *Best of ASCO* program to San Francisco's Marriott Hotel. Visit www.asco.org/boa for additional details. Watch for an announcement in the near future of an ANCO event on Friday evening of this meeting.

Additional Education Meetings

Other meetings of interest to ANCO member practices are:

April 12th, May 24th, June 14th
*The Third Annual Cancer Survivorship Series:
Living With, Through, & Beyond Cancer*
CancerCare (and others)
Telephone Education Workshop
(www.cancercare.org)

April 14th
*Educating Healthcare Professionals About Cancer
Screening and Treatment for Older People*
CancerCare (and others)
Telephone Education Workshop
(www.cancercare.org)

April 15th
*Bone Health for People Living with Multiple
Myeloma*
CancerCare (and others)
Telephone Education Workshop
(www.cancercare.org)

April 16th
*Understanding Lymphoma Basics and Current
Treatment Options for Patients and Caregivers*
Lymphoma Research Foundation & Fred
Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
Seattle

April 20th
Living with Prostate Cancer
CancerCare (and others)
Telephone Education Workshop
(www.cancercare.org)

April 28th
*Ask the Doctor About Innovations in Lymphoma
Therapy* (featuring Lawrence Kaplan, M.D.,
UCSF)

Lymphoma Research Foundation
San Francisco

May 18th, June 29th,
August 10th, September 21st, November 9th
Improving Your Chemotherapy Experience
CancerCare (and others)
Telephone Education Workshop
(www.cancercare.org)

May 26th
Multiple Myeloma: Update from ASCO
CancerCare (and others)
Telephone Education Workshop
(www.cancercare.org)

June 19-25th
Food As Medicine
Center for Mind-Body Medicine
Oakland
(www.cmbm.org)

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 at www.anco-online.org features:

- a general description and introduction to the *Association*, its activities, leadership, and membership benefits.
- advocacy information (including ANCO and ASCO MMA resources).
- clinical and professional education meeting announcements and distributed materials.
- survey reports and publications and WebLog.
- clinical trials information.
- links to affiliated organizations, and updated physician, nurse, manager, and patient resources.

The WebLog (ANCO News On-Line) posts and archives important news for oncology practices on an almost daily basis. Among the

additional news topics covered at www.anco-online.org/news/index.html are:

- ACCC Alerts
- ANCO meeting announcements
- ASCO's e-News, MMA Special Alerts, and MMA Todays
- CMA Alerts
- CMS/Medicare Website Updates
- NHIC/Medicare Website Updates

ANCO urges its members to bookmark www.anco-online.org/news/index.html (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.

California Oncology Consortium (COC)

The COC is a cooperative venture of ANCO and MOASC. The *Consortium* maintains two ListServes 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) for oncology pharmaceuticals and a wide-range of value-added services.

ION's 2005 meeting schedule in California (and adjacent states) includes:

- West Coast Nursing Meeting (Las Vegas; Apr. 15-17)
- Lung Symposium (Scottsdale; May 6-8)
- Business of Oncology (San Francisco; Jun. 17-19)

NOA's Spring Conference entitled *Survival Strategies in a Changing Environment* will take place on April 16th in Philadelphia. This meeting promises to equip all attendees, including physicians, nurses, and administrators, with practical clinical tools and reimbursement strategies that can easily be implemented in the oncology practice. Topics will include new coding and reimbursement strategies, supportive

care assessment and management tools, NOA Compare, and NOA Clinical Guidelines. Registration is available at www.noainc.com.

Hematology Oncology Leadership Network (HOLN)

HOLN is a network of state oncology and oncology manager societies from Northern California, Southern California, Connecticut, Georgia, New Jersey, Ohio/West Virginia, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. As an ANCO member, you may enroll in HOLN and benefit from discounted pricing from 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.

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, and ways to better serve the membership. *Board* meetings are open to the membership. The **next regularly scheduled ANCO Board of Directors teleconference** will take place on May 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 next *Directory* will be published in June 2005.

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

ALPHABETICAL DIRECTORY OF NURSE & OFFICE MANAGER CONTACTS

Ann Briscoe

15400 National Avenue, Suite 201
Los Gatos, CA 95032-2432
Telephone: (408) 358-8403
FAX: (408) 358-4022
abriscoe@jrcohenmd.com

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
Enzon Pharmaceuticals
Genentech BioOncology
Genitope Corporation • Genomic Health
GlaxoSmithKline
International Oncology Network
Lash Group Healthcare Consultants
Ligand Pharmaceuticals • Lilly Oncology
Matrix 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 Aventis Oncology
Schering-Plough Oncology • SuperGen
US Oncology • Wyeth Oncology

We especially wish to thank and welcome *Enzon Pharmaceuticals* as new Corporate Member in 2005.

Ortho Biotech is pleased to support a series of CME Audio Conferences entitled *Medicare Modernization Act, ASP, and Reimbursement* with Joseph S. Bailes, M.D. These audio conferences start on April 18th and are scheduled

periodically through July 7th. Contact the ANCO office or call (888) 700-3720 for additional information.

Schering-Plough Oncology reports to ANCO that **Temodar (temozolomide) capsules are now indicated for the treatment of adult patients with newly diagnosed glioblastoma multiforme** concomitantly with radiotherapy and then as maintenance treatment.

PhRMA has printed a **directory of patient assistance programs** offered by its member companies that provide free or reduced price medicine to people in need. Download this directory at www.asco.org/asco/downloads/PhRMA_Brochure.pdf.

The *Patient Access Network Foundation* (PANF) is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving access to needed health services for insured patients who cannot afford the out-of-pocket costs associated with their treatment. To be eligible for assistance, patients must meet certain financial, insurance, and medical criteria. Patients or providers can contact PANF directly at (866) 316-PANF (7263) or visit www.patientaccessnetwork.org for more information. PANF's *Chemo-Induced Nausea and Vomiting* (CINV) *Fund* helps make access to CINV treatment a reality for many patients who cannot afford the out-of-pocket medical expenses associated with their insurance coverage for anti-nausea therapies.

Institutional Member News

ANCO thanks the following **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 **Institutional Member's clinical trials**, including the latest edition of UCSF's *GI Oncology Trials Newsletter*, at www.anco-online.org/trials.html.

Learn more about **California's law requiring the coverage of routine care costs for patients enrolled in clinical trials** at www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/cancer/

clinical_trials/bigc/ where you can download ANCO's patient education brochure on SB37. The *National Cancer Institute* (NCI) has a *Clinical Trials Education Series* to help recruit patients available from (800) 4-CANCER or www.cancer.gov/publications.

BreastCancerTrials.org (BCT) is a web-based service to match breast cancer patients with clinical trials sponsored by the *National Cancer Institute's* (NCI) *Center for Bioinformatics*, the *University of California, San Francisco* (UCSF) *Comprehensive Cancer Center*, and the *Center of Excellence for Breast Cancer Care*. Patients looking for trials may enter detailed information about their cancer history into a completely confidential and secure online database. The patient's Personal Health Record (PHR) is used to match the patient with breast cancer trials that medical researchers have registered with BCT. BCT is a pilot project with approximately 50 breast cancer trials located in and around the San Francisco Bay Area and Sacramento. Visit www.breastcancertrials.org for more information.

For 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

UCSF's *1st International Symposium on Cancer Metastasis and the Lymphovascular System* takes place in San Francisco on April 28-30th. Visit cme.ucsf.edu/calendar/CourseDetail.asp?CourseNumber=MSU05002 for more information.

UCSF's *Pain Management and End-of-Life Care* takes place in San Francisco on June 9-10th. This course is designed for all physicians, nurses, and pharmacists who care for patients in pain or with life-threatening illness. It meets California's requirement that physicians take 12 hours of CME in pain and palliative care. Visit www.cme.ucsf.edu/cme/CourseDetail.aspx?coursenumber=DMM05513 for more information.

UCD's **online CME pain management courses** are now available at www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/cme/DistEd/WebEvents/PainEvents.htm. In addition, UCD is offering several **live pain management courses** in California and Hawaii. Visit www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/cme/Confrnce/Confrnce.htm for additional information.

Publications, Services, & Surveys

ANCO will repeat its **MMA Impact Survey** in the 2nd quarter of 2005. Data collected will be compared with that collected in the 4th quarter 2004. Please be sure to complete and return the ANCO MMA Impact Survey upon its receipt.

Membership Dues for 2005

Second notices of membership renewal were mailed in early March 2005. Return your 2005 membership dues to ANCO at your earliest convenience and renew your membership for 2005 as soon as possible. Be sure to take advantage of dues discounts and provide ANCO with the name(s) of office and/or nurse manager contact(s). Those not renewing their membership by June 1st will be deleted from the *Directory of Members*, will no longer be eligible for participation in ANCO's discounted pharmaceutical pricing programs, or receive any other ANCO benefits. Contact the ANCO office if you did not receive or 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!