

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 August 18th.

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 hematology/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, ASH, 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). ANCO and the *American Society of Hematology* (ASH) share

information with members. We regularly participate with these organizations on matters of national importance to cancer care.]

ASCO testified on July 27th at a hearing of the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health on issues related to cancer care quality. The *Committee* held the two-day hearing to review physician payment issues and pay-for-performance programs. The first part of the hearing focused on the impending 4.6% physician

**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 oncologists and hematologists dedicated to promoting high professional standards of cancer care 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.

fee schedule reductions planned for 2007 and proposals to tie future physician payment updates to current or future pay-for-performance programs. The second part of the hearing focused on the numerous quality initiatives specialty societies have already undertaken. It also featured Mark McClellan, M.D., CMS *Administrator* who reviewed CMS' attempts to better align the Medicare payment system with quality initiatives. Deborah Schrag, M.D., M.P.H., a medical oncologist and researcher at *Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center*, and *Past Chair* of ASCO's *Health Services Committee*, testified on behalf of ASCO. Schrag overviewed ASCO's quality cancer care initiatives and urged the *Committee* to support extension of the CMS 2006 oncology demonstration project. Schrag outlined the need for a cancer care treatment summary (i.e., a written document that would capture in a succinct format the patient's treatment history and plan for follow-up care with the intent to improve communication and coordination of care among oncologists, patients, and other health care providers) and appropriate reimbursement for this service. The questions from the *Committee* members on both days focused on the need for *Congress* to fix the flawed physician payment formula, how quality measures are defined and measured, and whether quality measures could be applied across a broad spectrum of health care providers. ASCO is continuing to work with *Congress* and CMS, as well as colleagues in the cancer community to ensure that any quality programs are designed to enable physicians to provide quality care efficiently and effectively. A number of pay-for-performance bills have been introduced in *Congress* already, and more are expected before the end of the year.

ANCO and ASCO continue to work towards ensuring that people with cancer have access to quality cancer care in the community. Among the recently updated resources available to practices at the specified addresses or via www.anco-online.org are:

- 2006 drug reimbursement is based on Average Sales Price (ASP) plus 6%. 3Q06 ASPs may be downloaded at www.cms.hhs.gov/McrPartBDrugAvgSalesPrice/

02_aspfiles.asp#TopOfPage or www.medicarenhic.com/providers/fees/drugallowlimits_july06.htm.

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.

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.]

The ANCO Board of Directors has endorsed Proposition 86, the Tobacco Tax of 2006. It will appear on the November ballot. ANCO encourages all members to support this initiative. Proposition 86 would increase the state's tobacco tax by \$.13 per cigarette (\$2.60 per pack) to provide financial help to some of California's major health challenges. The tax would raise approximately \$2.1B. After providing backfill funds to Proposition 10 programs (\$170M), the funds will be distributed to treatment (53%), prevention (42%), and research (5%) programs.

ANCO and MOASC have formed the ***California Oncology Political Action Committee*** or CalCancerPAC. ANCO launched fund-raising efforts for CalCancerPAC in December 2005 with its membership dues renewal. CalCancerPAC's goal is to support candidates sensitive to the needs of hematologists, oncologists, and people living with cancer in California.

California law (AB487) requires physicians to complete 12 hours of continuing medical education (CME) in pain management and the care of terminally ill and dying patients by the end of 2006. Doctors licensed in California after 2002 (when the law was enacted) have four years from the date of licensure to complete this CME requirement. CMA's next presentation of *Pain*,

Palliation, & Politics: Pain Management and End-of-Life Care in California's Regulatory Environment takes place on September 8 & 9th at the *San Francisco Marriot Hotel* and on December 1st & 2nd at the *Disneyland Hotel* in Anaheim. CMA tailored this program to meet the needs of physicians who do not specialize in pain medicine. Offering 14 hours of Category I CME, this program completely fulfills California's AB487 mandate. CMA members pay a \$335 registration fee; the nonmember registration fee is \$600. Register early and get \$40 off the registration fee. Visit www.calphys.org/html/cc205.asp for more information or contact CMA's pain management seminar hotline at (415) 882-3330. CMA and the *University of California, San Diego*, have also launched a unique case-based CME program entitled ***Pain Management: A Case-Based CME Program for Physicians*** on DVD that physicians can use to receive their State-mandated CME. Contact UCSD at (888) 229-6263 for more information.

NHIC/Medicare, DHS/MediCal, & Private Payers

[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.]

NHIC/Medicare is pleased to announce the ***Medicare Coverage Convoy seminar series***. In response to requests from providers NHIC/Medicare is hosting a full day of seminars with lunch, as well as morning and afternoon refreshments. Medicare providers and their billing personnel will have a choice of eight different breakout sessions to attend. Each attendee will be able to reserve a spot in four different sessions. The seminar topics include:

- How To Fill Out The New 1500 Claim Form
- Proper Billing for Physical and Occupational Therapy
- Global Surgery
- Proper Use of Modifiers
- Avoid Claim Denials
- Finding Medicare Information on the Internet

- Provider Enrollment and the New NPI (National Provider Identification) Number
- Handling Claims, Eligibility, Claim Status and Remittance Electronically

If you or a member of your staff is new, NHIC/Medicare will also be offering a half-day course entitled *Introduction to Medicare Billing*. Visit www.medicarenhic.com/cal_prov/seminars.shtml#17 for more information and to register.

NHIC/Medicare informs ANCO that CMS has removed pricing for J-codes 9093, 9095, 9096, and 9097 (i.e., cyclophosphamide). They have been instructed by CMS to request invoices when claims for these drugs are received. NHIC/Medicare will reimburse providers the price of the drug per the submitted invoice.

Physicians should be aware Medicare will not pay any claims for the last nine days of the Federal fiscal year (i.e., September 22nd-30th, 2006). This one-time payment hold—mandated by the *Deficit Reduction Act of 2006*—will defer \$1.3B in FY2006 claims to the FY2007 budget. Held claims will be paid on October 2nd. No interest or late-payment penalty will be paid to physicians or other health care providers whose payments are delayed by this one-time hold. This policy only applies to claims subject to payment. It does not apply to full denials, no-pay claims, and other non-claim payments such as periodic interim payments, home health requests for anticipated payments, and cost report settlements. Please note that payments will not be staggered and no advance payments will be allowed during this 9-day hold. Physicians with large numbers of Medicare patients should prepare now for this cash flow interruption. For more information, visit www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/MM5047.pdf.

The ***Medicare B Resource*** (June 2006) is available online at www.medicarenhic.com/news/provider_news/mbr_jun06.pdf.

An electronic version of the ***Evaluation & Management Services Guide***, which provides evaluation and management services information regarding medical record documentation; *International Classification of Diseases, 9th Revision*,

Clinical Modification; American Medical Association Current Procedural Terminology Codes; and, key elements of service is now available. Visit www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/eval_mgmt_serv_guide.pdf to download your copy.

Visit www.medicarehnic.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*).

DHS/MediCal informs ANCO that therapeutic hydration is a covered benefit using X-codes 7700, 7702, and 7704 as outlined in the *Provider Manual, Medical, Supplies and Drugs* (page 2).

EDUCATION

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

ANCO/NOA ASCO Highlights 2006

ANCO's annual *ASCO Highlights 2006*, this year in collaboration with the *National Oncology Alliance*, took place on Saturday morning, July 22nd at the *Hotel Nikko* in San Francisco. *Program Chairs* Lawrence Einhorn, M.D., *Indiana University*, and Margaret Tempero, M.D., *UC San Francisco*, moderated the program. Faculty from *Indiana University* (Lawrence Einhorn, M.D.), *Stanford University* (George Fisher, M.D.), *Amreen Husain, M.D.*, *UC Davis* (Primo Lara, M.D.), *UC Los Angeles* (John Glaspy, M.D.), and *UC San Francisco* (Hope Rugo, M.D.) reviewed the clinically most important research results presented at June's *ASCO Annual Meeting*. The meeting was accredited by *Indiana University*. You may download the presentations at www.anco-online.org/ASCOHL2006.html.

Commercial Insurance Trends & Oncology Practice Contracting Considerations

ANCO is pleased to sponsor two talks for oncologists and oncology practice managers entitled *Commercial Insurance Trends & Oncology Practice Contracting Considerations* with Rees Cooper, *Manager, Field Reimbursement, Lash*

Group Healthcare Consultants, on Tuesday, September 12th at the *Doubletree Hotel*, San José, and Wednesday, September 13th, at the *Hyatt Regency*, Sacramento. Both meetings begin at 9:30AM with registration and continental breakfast. Cooper will discuss the market forces driving change, trends in commercial insurance reimbursement, and possible provider responses to private payer trends. These meetings are supported in part by *AstraZeneca* and *Lash Group Healthcare Consultants*. Meetings announcements were mailed on August 1st; you may download a copy of the registration form at www.anco-online.org; and, a copy is attached to this edition of the *ANCO FAX News*.

ASH State of the Art Symposium: Hematologic Malignancies—Recent Advances in Therapy

ANCO is proud to cosponsor the *American Society of Hematology* (ASH) *State of the Art Symposium* entitled *Hematologic Malignancies—Recent Advances in Therapy* at the *Bellagio Hotel and Casino* in Las Vegas on September 15-16th. ANCO members who are not already ASH members are eligible for the ASH member registration rate as a result of our cosponsorship. Enter the promo code "STATESOC" as your ASH Membership ID Number or in the Promo Code field when registering online at www.hematology.org/meetings/sas/index.cfm.

ANCO 2006 Annual Meeting

ANCO's 2006 *Annual Meeting* will take place on Friday evening, November 3rd, and Saturday, November 4th, at the *Hyatt Vineyard Creek* in Santa Rosa. Additional details on the agenda and faculty will be forthcoming in the near future.

Additional Education Meetings

Other meetings of possible interest to ANCO member practices are:

August 16th

Radioimmunotherapy for non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma: Is This the Right Treatment for Me?
CancerCare
Telephone Education Workshop

August 24-25th

*Achieving Efficient Practice Operations;
Designing A Physician Compensation Plan for Your Practice*

Medical Group Management Association
Seattle

August 27-28th

Managing Physician Performance
Medical Group Management Association
Seattle

September 13-16th

*23rd National Oncology Economics Conference:
Gateway to Success for Cancer Programs and Practices*

Association of Community Cancer Centers
St. Louis, MO

September 19th

*Breast Cancer Now: The Importance of Taking
Your Pills Every Day*
CancerCare

Telephone Education Workshop

September 19-20th

*Adding, Updating and Expanding Comprehensive
Cancer Programs and Services*
Active Communications International
San Francisco

September 19th

*Better Bone Health for Men Living with Prostate
Cancer*
CancerCare

Telephone Education Workshop

September 22nd

Bone Health for Women Living with Breast Cancer
CancerCare

Telephone Education Workshop

September 27-30th

Chicago Supportive Oncology Conference
Chicago, IL

September 30th

Carcinoid/NET Physician Symposium
Carcinoid Cancer Foundation
Portland, OR

October 15-18th

26th Annual Oncology Nurses Symposium
Scripps Cancer Center
San Diego

October 18th-21st

Oncology Congress
New York, NY

October 27-29th

North American Educational Forum on Lymphoma
Lymphoma Research Foundation
Los Angeles

October 27-29th

Clinical Trials Workshop
American Society of Clinical Oncology
Schaumburg, IL

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)*.]

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, 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 hematology and 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 and Medicare & Quality Care Alerts/Updates
- 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.

ANCO continues to seek ways to make membership more beneficial. The *Board* constantly identifies, reviews, and approves of additional membership benefits. In addition to the benefits derived from its advocacy, educational, and information dissemination activities, ANCO members also benefit from group purchasing activities and value added services from a number of vendors, including:

- **Onmark**, OTN's preferred group purchasing organization. Contact Monique Weston at (650) 871-2108 or monique.weston@onmarkservices.com for more information.
- **Oncology Pharmaceutical Services (OPS)**, a division of *US Oncology*. Contact Sean Taylor at (415) 235-4673 or sean.taylor@usoncology.com for more information.

Onmark is hosting several educational programs this Summer to help everyone in the medical oncology practice, including:

- **Managing Patients Receiving Fluoropyrimidines in the Outpatient Clinic Setting** with Jody Pelusi, PhD, FNP, AOCN, *Oncology Nurse Practitioner*, *Arizona Oncology Associates* on August 21st to discuss effective strategies for managing patients that receive oral chemotherapy. This program is supported by *Roche Oncology*.

Visit www.onmarkservices.com (*Educational Events*) for additional information and to register for these programs.

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 individual physician members. The **next regularly scheduled ANCO Board of Directors teleconference** will take place on September 5th. Please call José Luis González, *ANCO Executive Director*, at (415) 472-3960 if you wish to participate in a future meeting.

Individual Member News

Alta Bates Comprehensive Cancer Center and Jeff Wolf, M.D., are conducting a clinical research trial for patients with newly diagnosed chronic myelogenous leukemia (CML) with an investigational dose of Gleevec and are looking for patients who may be eligible to participate. To qualify for this trial, the patient must be 18 to 75 years of age, diagnosed with CML in chronic phase in the last 6 months, and have not received Gleevec for longer than 2 weeks prior to study entry. All study related procedures and study medication will be provided at no cost for the duration of 5 years provided that the patient does not discontinue early from the study. The patient will remain in the care of their physician, although he or she will be required to make intermittent study visits to *Alta Bates*. For more information, contact Jeff Wolf, M.D., at (510) 204-6401.

The ANCO Directory of Members 2006 was published and mailed to ANCO physician members; nurse and office manager contacts; and, Corporate Member representatives at the end of June. Additional copies are available from the ANCO office upon request. Please verify your *Directory* entry and contact the ANCO office with any corrections, additions, and/or deletions. The next *Directory* will be published in June 2007.

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

ALPHABETICAL DIRECTORY OF PHYSICIAN MEMBERS

Ari D. Baron, M.D.
Kathleen Grant, M.D.
Usha K. Sunkara, M.D.
Bertrand Tuan, M.D.

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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 hematology/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 Oncology/Onyx Pharmaceuticals
Berlex Laboratories • biogenIDEC
Bristol-Myers Squibb Oncology
Cephalon Oncology • Clariant Diagnostics
Enzon Pharmaceuticals
Genentech BioOncology
Genotope Corporation • Genomic Health
GlaxoSmithKline
International Oncology Network
Lash Group Healthcare Consultants
Lilly Oncology • Matrix Oncology
MedImmune Oncology • MGI Pharma

Millennium • National Oncology Alliance
Novartis Oncology
Oncology Pharmaceutical Services
Oncology Supply • OTN • Onmark
Ortho Biotech/Tibotec Therapeutics
OSI Pharmaceuticals • Pfizer Oncology
Pharmion • Roche Oncology
Sanofi Aventis Oncology
Schering-Plough Oncology • SuperGen

We especially wish to thank and welcome *AstraZeneca*, *Clariant Diagnostics*, and *Pharmion* as new Corporate Members in 2006. We regret to announce that *Chiron Corporation* and *Wyeth Oncology* are no longer Corporate Members of ANCO.

AMGEN informs ANCO that ASCO has updated its *Recommendations for the Use of White Blood Cell Growth Factors*. The 2006 update was published in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology* on July 1st.

Genentech BioOncology informs ANCO that **Avastin** has obtained compendia listing for **metastatic breast cancer**, HER-2 negative disease, 1st line therapy in combination with paclitaxel, and **non-squamous non-small cell lung cancer**, advanced/metastatic, 1st line treatment, in combination with paclitaxel and carboplatin.

Lilly Oncology informs ANCO that the FDA has approved **Gemzar** in combination with carboplatin for patients with advanced ovarian cancer that has relapsed at least six months after completion of platinum based therapy.

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 supports the research study entitled **New Approaches to Breast Cancer Care: Communication, Integration** funded by the *California Breast Cancer Research Program* and conducted by *UC San Francisco*. The study's purpose is to understand how physicians

integrate new techniques into practice and to understand the challenges they face when communicating with their patients about these new approaches. ANCO encourages all members to support this study and to complete the survey upon receipt.

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

Stanford's *Clinical Trials in Cutaneous Lymphoma* takes place at the *Stanford Cancer Center* on August 30th. Visit med.stanford.edu/seminars/details-documents.jsp?semid=9328 for more information.

Stanford's *Pain and Palliative Care Conference* takes place at the *Stanford Arrillaga Alumni Center* on August 30th-31st. Visit med.stanford.edu/seminars/details-documents.jsp?semid=9329 for more information.

UCD's *7th Annual Advances in Oncology* takes place at the *Hyatt Regency* in Sacramento on September 30th.

Stanford's *Perspectives on Pain and Palliative Care* takes place in Hawaii on October 2nd-4th. Visit med.stanford.edu/seminars/details-documents.jsp?semid=8352 for more information. The program will be repeated on December 8-9th in Palo Alto. Visit med.stanford.edu/seminars/details-documents.jsp?semid=8353 for more information.

UCSF's *Pain Management and End-of-Life Care* takes place in San Francisco on November 16-17th. 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=MDM06P26](#) for more information.

The *8th Annual UCSF/UCD Thoracic Oncology Conference* takes place in San Francisco on November 18th. Visit www.cme.ucsf.edu/cme/CourseDetail.aspx?coursenumber=MSU07004 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

The July (Vol. 2, Issue 4) issue of ASCO's *Journal of Oncology Practice* features articles discussing medical malpractice, a profile of ANCO member Ravi Patel, M.D., and summaries of ASCO's updated clinical guidelines on anti-emetics and white blood cell growth factors. Visit www.jopasco.org to view these articles.

Caring4cancer.com is a portal with **all the specific coding and billing information a busy oncology practice manager needs**. It includes cancer-specific Medicare regulations, forms, coding education pieces, and a subscription to a free newsletter from Bobbi Buell. Visit www.caring4cancer.com and select *Practice Management*).