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 September 29th.

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.]

ANCO FAX News
for every member of your practice
or organization.
Pass it along!

There is information in the

- ☐ Physician Members
- Nurse & Office Managers
 - ☐ Office Staff
- □ Colleagues & Representatives

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.]

During this critical time for cancer care, ASCO is fully engaged in ongoing efforts to ensure that cancer patients get the care they need and that practitioners have the resources to provide that care. ASCO is actively engaged in both the legislative and regulatory processes and continues to work with others in the cancer community committed to credible and effective advocacy in

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.

Washington, D.C. ASCO's strength is its ability to address all issues that impact the quality of cancer care—reimbursement, quality, and clinical trials among them. The next few months will be critical in Washington. Congress is scheduled to adjourn at the end of September for mid-term elections and will likely return in December for a "lame-duck" session before the new Congress convenes in 2007. Between now and December, it will be increasingly important for Congress to address important quality cancer initiatives. The resignation of CMS Administrator Mark McClellan creates a critical vacancy during a time when the cancer community is discussing the cuts in the physician fee schedule as well as extending the oncology demonstration project, and ASCO is engaged with CMS at every level. In the months ahead, ASCO will continue to communicate with Members of Congress, Administration officials, and their offices to highlight four urgent matters that represent the foundation of ASCO's quality care priorities:

- Addressing the issue of "underwater" drugs: HR5179, introduced by *Representative* Ralph Hall, would give CMS the authority to increase drug payments when practices and institutions cannot obtain drugs for the Medicare payment rate. It would also remove prompt-pay discounts that are not passed on to practices and institutions from the average sales price (ASP) formula, to better reflect available market prices.
- Delaying the impending imaging cuts: HR5704/S3795, the Access to Medical Imaging Act, introduced by Representative Joe Pitts in the House and Senator Gordon Smith in the Senate, would delay deep cuts in reimbursement for medical imaging scheduled to go into effect in 2007. If passed, this legislation would protect access to these essential services that enhance patient care while a study is conducted on the potential access issues associated with the cuts.
- Reversing the physician fee schedule cut: CMS is estimating a 5.1% cut to physician payments due to the flawed *Sustainable Growth Rate* (SGR) formula. ASCO is lobbying *Congress* to pass

legislation to reverse this cut and provide physicians with a positive update.

• Obtain recognition for the full spectrum of oncology services: ASCO supports efforts such as HR5465, legislation introduced this summer by *Representatives* Lois Capps and Tom Davis, which would establish a new Medicare service for comprehensive cancer care planning at the time of diagnosis through the end of active treatment and beyond.

It is very important that *Congress* and the *Administration* hear about the challenges and difficulties you are facing in your practices to provide quality care for people with cancer. You can share this information with your *Member* of *Congress*, and ask him or her to support the four priorities listed above. To find your *Member* of *Congress* and send him or her a message, go to capwiz.com/asco. Also, you can share your stories with ASCO leaders and staff by sending an e-mail to publicpolicy@asco.org. ASCO is on *Capitol Hill* talking to members of *Congress* nearly every day, and they can communicate what is happening to you to the *Congressional* leadership as well.

On September 28th, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will hold a public meeting to discuss patient and physician concerns around access to IVIG therapy. An HHS contractor is currently conducting an analysis of supply, distribution, demand, and access issues associated with IVIG. Testimony provided at the HHS meeting will be taken into consideration as part of this analysis. ASCO is planning to testify at the meeting and will prepare written comments. To help us prepare an accurate and comprehensive picture of IVIG access issues for people with cancer, please complete a 12-question survey and return it to ASCO no later than Monday, September 25th. All survey data will be kept confidential. Obtain your survey from Bela Sastry at sastryb@asco.org.

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*, appearing 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.

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 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.]

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 9day 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.

Effective October 1st, Medicare will only generate HIPAA-compliant *Electronic Remittance Advice* (ERA) transactions (transaction 835 version 004010A1) to all electronic remittance advice receivers. In doing so, Medicare will stop sending electronic remittance advice in any version other than the standard HIPAA version (835 version 004010A1), or in any other format (e.g., NSF). For more information on *Ending the Contingency for Remittance Advice*, visit www.cms.hhs.gov/ MLNMattersArticles/downloads/SE0646.pdf.

Health care providers are required by law to apply for a *National Provider Identifier* (NPI). For complete information, visit www.cms.hhs.gov/NationalProvIdentStand. CMS will host a national NPI roundtable teleconference, open to all health care professionals, on Tuesday, September 26th from

2:00-3:30PM *Eastern Time*. To participate, you may call (877) 203-0044, pass code 4795739. While CMS will only address questions from a Medicare perspective, this information may be helpful to all providers.

Form CMS-1500 (12-90) is being revised to accommodate the reporting of the NPI. Form CMS-1500 (08-05) will be effective October 1st, but will not be mandated for use until February 1st, 2007. There will be a dual acceptability period of the current and the revised forms. To learn more about the revised form, visit www.cms.hhs.gov/transmittals/downloads/ R899CP.pdf.

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

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*).

EDUCATION

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

Commercial Insurance Trends & Oncology Practice Contracting Considerations

ANCO sponsored 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. Cooper discussed the market forces driving change, trends in commercial insurance reimbursement, and possible provider responses to private payer trends. These meetings were supported in part by AstraZeneca and Lash Group Healthcare Consultants.

Good Business=Good Medicine

ANCO will sponsor two talks for oncologists and oncology practice managers entitled *Good Business=Good Medicine* with John Hennessey, Executive Director, Kansas City Cancer Center, and Rosemarie Nelson, Principal, MGMA Health Care Consulting Group, on Wednesday, October 11th at the *Hyatt Regency*, Sacramento, and Thursday, October 12th, at the Fairmont San José. Hennessey and Nelson will provide physician leaders and practice administrators a better understanding of the business of oncology, advice on implementing sound business practices to the management of their clinical practice, and a demonstration of how sound business practices contribute to quality oncology care. These meetings are supported in part by Genomic Health, Novartis Oncology, and Oncology Pharmaceutical Services. A copy of the meeting announcement is attached or you may download a copy at www.anco-online.org/ancoops.html.

New Taxane-Based Strategies in the Chemotherapy of Advanced and Early Stage Breast Cancer

ANCO recognizes Breast Cancer Awareness Month with a talk for oncologists and oncology nurses entitled New Taxane-Based Strategies in the Chemotherapy of Advanced and Early Stage Breast Cancer with Andrew D. Seidman, M.D., Weill College of Medicine, Cornell University, and Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, on Tuesday, October 17th at the Lafayette Park Hotel. Seidman will provide a comprehensive review of current breast cancer treatment. This meeting is supported by Abraxis Oncology. A copy of the meeting announcement is attached or you may download a copy at www.anco-online.org/bcam.html.

Additional Education Meetings

Other meetings of possible interest to ANCO member practices are:

September 19th
Breast Cancer Now: The Importance of Taking
Your Pills Every Day
Cancer Care
Telephone Education Workshop

September 19th

Better Bone Health for Men Living with Prostate

Cancer Care

Telephone Education Workshop

September 19-20th

Adding, Updating and Expanding Comprehensive

Cancer Programs and Services

Active Communications International

San Francisco

September 22nd

Bone Health for Women Living with Breast Cancer

Cancer Care

Telephone Education Workshop

September 23rd

Breast Cancer: Depression, Menopause, and Sexual

Side Effects of Treatment (for Health Care

Professionals)

Northern California Cancer Center

San Francisco

September 27-30th

Chicago Supportive Oncology Conference

Chicago, IL

September 30th

Cultural Influence on Medical Decision-Making:

Strategies for Health Care Professionals

Northern California Cancer Center

Burlingame

September 30th

Carcinoid/NET Physician Symposium

Carcinoid Cancer Foundation

Portland, OR

October 4th

Medical Update on the Hormonal Treatment of

Breast Cancer

Cancer Care

Telephone Education Workshop

October 9-15th

CancerGuides 2006

Center for Mind-Body Medicine

Chicago, IL

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

October 29th-31st

Fall Conference

California Hospice Foundation

Newport Beach

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.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Board of Directors

The ANCO *Board of Directors* teleconferenced on September 5th to discuss and/or act upon the following issues:

- National and California legislative/regulatory issues and public and private payer issues.
- Clinical and professional education, and *Annual Meeting* plans for 2006 and 2007.
- California Oncology Emergency Master Plan.

- Additional membership benefits and surveys.
- Budget and investment status.
- *Board* member attendance at meetings/teleconferences.

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, 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 November 8th. 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 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

Vandana B. Sharma, M.D.

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ALPHABETICAL DIRECTORY OF NURSE & OFFICE MANAGER CONTACTS

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Corporate Member News

ANCO thanks the following Corporate Members for their generous support that enables ANCO to grow and expand its services for the 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 • Clarient Diagnostics Enzon Pharmaceuticals Genentech BioOncology Genitope 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*, *Clarient 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.

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

For information on continuing medical education meetings being organized by our Institutional Members, please visit:

- med.stanford.edu/seminars/cmeall.jsp?qcme=on
- www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/cme/ conferences
- www.cme.ucsf.edu/cme/index.aspx?Display=Date

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.

UCSF's 6th Annual Clinical Cancer Update takes place at Lake Tahoe on January 26-27th, 2007. Visit www.cme.ucsf.edu/cme/
CourseDetail.aspx?coursenumber=MSU07006 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.

Clinical Trial News

ANCO members can obtain information about Institutional Member's clinical trials at www.anco-online.org/trials.html.

The *National Cancer Institute* (NCI) also has a *Clinical Trials Education Series* to help recruit patients. It is available from (800) 4-CANCER or www.cancer.gov/publications.

Patient News

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.

Publications, Services, & Surveys

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*).