THE TOOLS

FROM THE INTERNET

HIPAA Resources

Looking for help in meeting the standards mandated in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996? Here is a list of key web resources as reviewed by *Medicine on the Net* (Vol. 7, No. 10, 2001.).

- *http://www.ahima.org/hot.topics.* The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) offers extensive coverage of HIPAA requirements and articles. Sign up for a newsletter on coding compliance.
- *http://healthdatamanagement.com/html/hipaa/HIPAA.cfm.* Here is a valuable daily update of articles and analysis devoted to HIPAA.
- *http://www.himss.org/templates/hipaasource.asp.* Developed by the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS), this site offers a HIPAA conference calendar, news, a compliance calendar, assessment and implementation tools, and links.
- *http://www.hipaagives.org.* Here, users can exchange information and discuss issues related to HIPAA.
- *http://www.csc.com/industries/healthservices/offerings.* Developed by Computer Sciences Corporation, this site offers a phased approach for moving from compliance to administrative simplification.

DRUGS

Making News

- The U.S. Pharmacopeia (USP) recently accepted treatment of gastrointestinal stromal tumors (GISTs) as an off-label use for imatinib mesylate (Gleevec). USP also accepted temozolomide (Temodar) for the treatment of melanoma.
- Arsenic trioxide (Trisenox) received orphan drug designation from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the treatment of chronic myeloid and acute myelocytic leukemias.
- Barr Laboratories Inc. received FDA approval for Flutamide capsules 125 mg, the generic equivalent of Schering Corp.'s Eulexin capsules. Eulexin is indicated for use in combination with LHRH agonists for the management of locally confined stage B2-C and D2 metastatic carcinoma of the prostate.

PHOTOGRAPH BY EYEWIRE

Drug safety

Cancer care professionals and pharmacists can find essential information about the safety of medical products and prescriptions at the site of MedWatch: The Food and Drug Administration Safety Information and Adverse Event Reporting Program. The site monitors and rapidly communicates information about adverse events and problems to improve patient care. The "Safety Information" section of the site provides medical product safety alerts, recalls, withdrawals, and important labeling changes and updates *(http://www.fda.gov/medwatch/new.htm)*. Sign up to receive timely e-mail notification of new information and alerts on the MedWatch web site by sending an e-mail to *medwatch@listmanager.fda.gov* with "Subscribe" in the subject field.

NEW PRODUCTS

- The CyberKnife with Dynamic Tracking Software (DTS), a product of Accuracy Inc. (Sunnyvale, Calif.), received FDA clearance for radiosurgery treatment of tumors and lesions. The

TOOLS

CyberKnife Stereotactic Radiosurgery System is the first robotic system to receive FDA clearance for providing radiosurgical ablation anywhere in the body. The non-invasive surgical device integrates robotics with image-guidance technology and is used to destroy small tumors with large doses of very accurately targeted radiation. Tumors in the spine, for example, where proximity to the spinal cord makes surgery difficult, can be treated non-invasively using the Cyberknife. For more information, visit *http://www.accuray.com*.

■ **The Centrica™ Rotational Core Biopsy System.** Endocare Inc. (Irvine, Calif.), recently received FDA clearance for a minimally invasive biopsy system for tumors of the breast. An ultrasound-guided, stainless steel probe freezes and retracts a portion of the tumor through a 2-millimeter incision. The 20-minute, office-based procedure allows most patients to resume normal activities the next day. For more information visit: *http://www.endocare.com*.

■ **Laser coronary catheter.** Spectranetics Corporation (Colorado Springs, Colo.) received FDA approval to market its excimer laser coronary catheters for use with stents prior to brachytherapy. Brachytherapy is used in more than 100,000 coronary procedures per year in the U.S. to prevent cardiac stents from being clogged with scar tissue.

■ **Biliary stent delivery system.** Medtronic Inc. (Minneapolis, Minn.) received FDA clearance for its Bridge SE Biliary Self-Expanding Stent Delivery System, a new kind of stent designed to aid bile flow for patients with malignant tumors. The system offers an alternative to constant catheterization. It features a push-button handle that can be manipulated with one hand for ease of delivery and a Z2-guide catheter with a soft distal segment that minimizes vessel trauma and provides back-up as the stent is maneuvered into place.

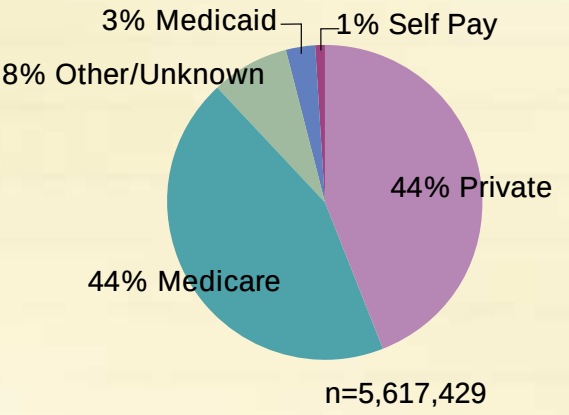
■ **Computerized dosing system.** RxFiles Corporation (Sarasota, Fla.) is making available its Intelligent Dosing System IDS™, a computerized decision support system to enable medical professionals to prescribe more accurately the most effective drug dose for the individual patient. The IDS dosing system is a suite of three software applications designed for use on a hand-held personal digital assistant or computer. The three applications include DoseRx™, a "next" dose calculator; InterchangeRx™, a therapeutic interchanger that safely switches patients between drugs, from brands to generics, or between drug classes while maintaining the original agent's established therapeutic effect; and Practice PrescribeRx™, a graded prescriber training simulator to introduce new drugs, refresh experience with seldom-used drugs, and document proficiency among medical professionals.

Current dosing methods have an accuracy and precision level from 20 to 60 percent, according to RX Files Corporation. The IDS provides precision and accuracy of 90 to 97 percent. Accuracy is defined as the exact dose needed for the patient to reach a specific response or marker on the next dose. The IDS, reviewed and classified as a Class II Medical Device, is the first dosing system to have such FDA classification.

FAST FACTS

Payer Mix for Oncology Care: Physician Office Chemotherapy Visits*

Medicare and private payers account for 88 percent of payment sources for physician office oncology services. Medicare often serves as a trendsetter and as such its policies may influence Medicaid and managed care policies.



**Source: Covance Health Economics and Outcomes Services in a presentation by Christopher T. Mancill, Oct. 4, 2001, at ACCC's 18th National Oncology Economics Conference. From: Covance analysis of chemotherapy visits as reported in the National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey (1993-1997).*