

# Charting the Course Ahead

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*Change your opinions,  
keep to your principles;  
change your leaves,  
keep intact your roots.*  
—Victor Hugo



Every year ACCC changes. These transformations begin at the top with the annual election of a new president and executive board, and trickle down through the Association, resulting in new committee chairs and members, changes in policies and procedures, and the adoption of new strategies and goals. As clinicians practicing in the exciting and ever-changing field of oncology, change is all around us. To live life is to change, and we must learn to manage change or find that change will manage us.

Today, we are facing many changes in cancer care. Surgery is becoming increasingly video-assisted and is incorporating new procedures, such as hepatic-directed therapies and sentinel node biopsies. Surgeons and pathologists are now able to offer more detailed molecular evaluations to guide individualized therapy. To help ACCC keep abreast of and monitor such changes in the coming year, we will be appointing a specialty chair in surgical oncology.

In radiation oncology, new developments include intensity modulated radiation therapy and radiation sensitizers, as well as the increasing use of brachytherapy. ACCC's meetings, publications, and new specialty chair in radiation oncology will be a conduit for the flow of new information on radiologic cancer therapies into and out of the Association.

Today's medical oncologists face changes in chemotherapy, antibody therapy, the introduction of new

drugs with novel mechanisms of action, and the emerging field of antiangiogenesis biotherapy, all which must be incorporated into existing oncology programs at hospitals and physician offices. The reimbursement of these therapies remains uncertain, but they offer medical oncologists opportunities to improve

patient outcomes. ACCC's new specialty chair in medical oncology will help keep the Association informed about changes in treatment, as well as sit on ACCC's Ad Hoc Committee on New and Emerging Technologies. Moreover, in 2003 ACCC will strengthen its relationship with the American Society of Clinical Oncology and the American Society of Hematology.

As we all know too well, dramatic changes on the regulatory and legislative fronts are threatening access to quality, state-of-the-art cancer care. To help us better understand and confront whatever constraints may be looming ahead, ACCC's Governmental Affairs Committee will continue its activities with payment reform. We will work with our state oncology societies and our new cancer program administrator and practice administrator specialty chairs to coordinate educational programs and make public policy recommendations.

Today, we in the oncology community find ourselves at the frontier of a vast array of previously unimaginable advances in cancer genetics, pharmaceuticals, information technology, and treatment delivery systems. In this exciting and rapidly changing environment, ACCC's goal is to help its members adapt to changes efficiently in the present and chart a successful course for the next year. ☐

## Coming in Your 2003 Oncology Issues

- ◆ Two Model Breast Care Centers
  - ◆ Benefits of a Nurse Case Manager in the Breast Clinic
  - ◆ Dealing with Private Insurers
  - ◆ Marketing a Cancer Center on a Shoestring Budget
  - ◆ How the Veterans Administration Health System Went Paperless
  - ◆ Developing and Maintaining a Community Research Program
- Plus, a continuing series on pain management
- ◆ Obstacles to Effective Pain Management in Patients with Cancer
  - ◆ Morphine in Cancer Pain: Multiple Uses and Misconceptions About Addiction
  - ◆ Cross-Cultural Issues in the Treatment of Cancer Pain
  - ◆ Neural Blockade and Cancer Pain