

Full-Speed Ahead for Premium Services

In April 2003 ACCC introduced a new program for the state oncology societies it manages. The goal: to help educate practices and insurers about office management issues and oncology-specific reimbursement issues, such as expanded drug indications. ACCC's State Society Premium Service Initiative has achieved a number of milestones in its first year:

- The Oncology Advisory Panels are up and running.
- Requests for expanded drug indications have gone to advisory panels for review.

- The program's web-based education service has been very successful. Every ACCC-managed state oncology society has posted questions and received answers within 48 hours. These questions and answers are forming a new database of oncology-specific reimbursement education.

- Eight reimbursement educational seminars have been held, one each in Arizona, Hawaii, Illinois, Nevada, Minnesota, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Indiana. Seminars will be held in Iowa, Washington, and Virginia in January/February 2004.

Attendance was beyond expectation. Illinois, for example, had more

than 75 practice administrators, billing and coding personnel, physicians, and oncology nurses.

Attendees gave rave reviews to the reimbursement educational seminars:

"Great presentation. Best program I've ever attended in reimbursement!"

"When will this program be offered again? I want to bring my whole staff. We need you now!"

"Fantastic meeting and I especially love those hand-outs. I will start using them right away."

"Very educational for physicians. We need to get more doctors to attend these programs."



Attendance has been beyond expectation at ACCC's reimbursement meetings, offered through its State Society Premium Service Initiative.

ACCC's package of Premium Services for state-level oncology societies is comprised of three major components: an Oncology Advisory Panel, reimbursement education services, and a one-day reimbursement education seminar.

- *The Oncology Advisory Panel.* With support from ACCC, the state oncology society establishes an Oncology Advisory Panel to work with the payers in its state on specific payer issues and develop a process for approvals for additional drug indication requests. The Oncology Advisory Panel consists of three oncologists, one of whom is a member of the Carrier Advisory Committee to Medicare. The Advisory Panel reviews

requests from practices on appropriate use of drugs for expanded indications.

If the state society's Advisory Panel accepts the request, based on "Standards of Care," the state society forwards the request to primary payers within the state, who in turn review the request. If approved by the payer, the state society's membership offices are immediately notified.

- *Reimbursement Education Service.* The new Premium Services package allows ACCC to offer a state-specific Reimbursement Education Service that provides physician and practice staff with state-specific information. Members of ACCC managed state oncology societies can access this service by visiting www.accc-cancer.org and clicking on their state society.

- *Reimbursement Educational Seminars.* The Premium Services package offers seminars that include an Oncology Reimbursement Program addressing practical billing issues, with special focus on payer-specific problems and state concerns, and a Management Program that is directed to the needs of the practice managers and physicians related to daily operations and regulations.

The Association is active in supporting and establishing state-level oncology organizations. These organizations of oncologists and other health care providers offer a forum for discussion of patient care, local reimbursement, and legislative issues on the state and national level. Currently, 22 state oncology societies are ACCC Chapter members, and 13 oncology societies use ACCC management services.

ACCC's Fall Regional Oncology Reimbursement Symposia

ACCC's 2003 Regional Oncology Reimbursement Symposia provide updates on the latest regulatory and legislative changes affecting cancer delivery. These free meetings are open to all cancer care professionals, including program administrators, oncologists, oncology nurses, hospital and practice billers and coders, hospital pharmacists, physician office managers, and oncology social workers.

ACCC's regional symposia also help cancer programs understand the ambulatory payment classification (APC) billing process and assist physician offices with billing and coding questions.

The meetings, entitled *Redefining Cancer Economics in 2003*, were held in four states in November and December. (See list below.) Attendees at the Chicago meeting listened to ASCO President-Elect David H. Johnson, MD, speak on



South Carolina Oncology Society President Darren Mullins, MD, at ACCC's regional symposium in Charleston, S.C., in December.

clinical practice issues facing oncologists. ACCC Policy Coordinator Rebecca Kane, MS, provided the 130 participants with a legislative and regulatory update. The program also featured a panel discussion on collaborative practice models.

In Charleston, participants heard ONS Director-at-Large Ruth E. Van Gerpen, RN, MS, CNS, OCN, speak on "Trends Affecting Nursing Care, Nurse Staffing, and Patient Care." Joseph S. Bailes, MD, FACP, Past President of ASCO, spoke on clinical practices issues affecting medical oncologists.

In the past 12 years, ACCC has hosted more than 140 Regional Oncology Symposia in conjunction



Ruth E. Van Gerpen, RN, MS, CNS, OCN®, Oncology Nursing Society director-at-large, spoke on trends affecting nursing care at the Charleston symposium.

with state medical oncology societies. These popular meetings have become a tradition and are highly valued by attendees around the country.

2003 Fall Regional Symposia

November 20: Chicago, Ill.
Co-hosted by the Illinois Medical Oncology Society, Oncology Nursing Society of Illinois, and the Illinois State Oncology and Hematology Administrators

December 2: Charleston, S.C.
Co-hosted by the South Carolina Oncology Society

December 9: Las Vegas, Nev.
Co-hosted by the Nevada Oncology Society

December 11: Los Angeles (Riverside), Calif.
Co-hosted by the Medical Oncology Association of Southern California

ACCC's People on the Move

ACCC welcomes announcements of new appointments, awards, and honors bestowed on members of your oncology team. The announcements are posted on ACCC's Members Only web site under the "People on the Move" section. Submit your information and announcements by logging on to ACCC's Members Only site

(www.accc-cancer.org/members-only/) and clicking on the "Members on the Move" e-mail button. 

