

# What's Ahead in 2004

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**ACCC** is facing another challenging year in 2004. Reimbursement remains at the forefront of the issues, not only for medical oncologists in private practice, but also for radiation oncology and hospitals. As always, ACCC is committed to working independently and collaboratively with other oncology organizations to ensure that oncology professionals and institutions receive appropriate reimbursement in order to continue to provide quality cancer care to our patients and their families.



For example, this past February, ACCC had a very successful meeting with the National Cancer Institute (NCI). Many strategic initiatives were discussed and collaborative opportunities were identified for the next 12 months and into the future. Much discussion centered around cancer research and the continued need for community hospital participation in clinical trials. New this year will be a joint NCI and ACCC clinical research award, which will recognize community clinical research physicians who have made a significant contribution to oncology research. With over 80 percent of cancer patients being treated in community hospitals, this new award will recognize the crucial role these community physicians play and, hopefully, increase awareness of community oncology research.

Education is going to be another high priority this year. Through ACCC's Center for Provider Education, numerous educational courses, such as *Practical Economics: Making Rational Drug Purchasing Decisions for the Hospital Outpatient Setting*, are going to be provided free of charge to ACCC members across the country. For information about

these educational opportunities, log onto ACCC's web site at: [www.accc-cancer.org/education](http://www.accc-cancer.org/education). ACCC will also be continuing its popular Cancer Program Improvement Project, which provides cancer programs with

the innovative tools they need to solve management problems and ensure financial viability. Members who take this educational course receive the *Oncology Reimbursement Toolbox* that offers a detailed explanation of the hospital outpatient revenue generation process for cancer services, including medical oncology, radiation

oncology, and pharmacy.

In 2004 ACCC will also be ramping up its Oncology Pharmacy Education Network (OPEN) and developing practical courses and tools for the oncology pharmacist.

And finally, one of the greatest issues facing the entire oncology community is our manpower shortage—physicians, nurses, pharmacists, technical staff, and other oncology professionals. ACCC will be conducting manpower studies and then analyzing the immediate and future effect that these staffing shortages will have on the ability to provide quality oncology care. For its 2004-2005 President's Grant, ACCC will be working with our sister oncology organization, the Oncology Nursing Society; the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists; and the Association of Oncology Social Work to determine inpatient and outpatient staffing guidelines.

The next 12 months promises to be an exciting ride and it's never been a more important time to be an ACCC member. I urge you to take advantage of these opportunities by logging onto ACCC's web site and *Members-Only* web site on a regular basis. ■

## Coming in Your 2004 Oncology Issues

- ◆ Reimbursement Must-Knows for Physician Practices
- ◆ Multidisciplinary Cancer Clinics and Teams
- ◆ Understanding and Negotiating Pricing with Your Pharmaceutical Representatives
- ◆ Financial Trends for Freestanding Centers
- ◆ Malpractice Insurance Woes

