

## ACCC's National Oncology Economics Conference in Dallas—Are You Ready for Change?

Speaking to nearly 500 oncology professionals, Steven Eastaugh, ScD, kicked off ACCC's 24<sup>th</sup> National Oncology Economics Conference with a powerful keynote address on *Healthcare Reform: Efficiency & Equity*. The conference was held Oct. 3-6, in Dallas, Tex.

"Healthcare reformation is here. Seventy-one percent of Ameri-

cans...want universal access for all, even if it would cost an extra \$1,000 in extra taxes each year," Eastaugh said. He acknowledged the many challenges facing today's cancer programs, including cost-push inflation related to new technology acquisition; projected labor shortages; less funds for education; and staggering administrative and paperwork bur-

dens. He suggested four financial strategies for cancer programs: 1) question your managed care contracts and Medicare payments; 2) reduce your error rate for charge capture to under 11 or 12 percent; 3) benchmark against local competition; and 4) consider collaboration, teaming up with a merger or consolidation. "In times of stress, you



**Keynote speaker Steven Eastaugh, ScD, energized conference attendees with an opening address highlighting challenges and changes coming to healthcare providers. "It's not enough to offer state-of-the-art cancer care," he warned. "We now need to help our patients pay for this care."**



Conference participants enjoyed a wide range of session topics, including legislative and regulatory updates; information on compendia changes; pay-for-performance; and much more.

circle the wagons, and some of you might be more financially viable if you get together as a larger entity," he said.

Eastaugh urged attendees to continue their advocacy efforts on behalf of access to care. "Quality cancer care is a civil right," he said. "...equity of access has to address the issue of the uninsured and also the underinsured."

On Thursday, Oct. 4, David H. Johnson, MD, was presented with  
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ACCC's annual Clinical Research Award. Dr. Johnson is director, Division of Hematology/Oncology at Vanderbilt University Medical School in Nashville, Tenn., and deputy director of the Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center.

Conference sessions covered a wide range of topics including model survivorship programs; an update on drug compendia changes; getting the most from your cancer registry; information the 340B drug program; a new technology expert panel; legislative updates from CMS and ACCC, and more.

If one overarching message echoed throughout meeting sessions, it was this: Changes are coming and community cancer centers need to stay informed, stay vigilant, and stay committed to advocating for quality care. Keynote speaker Steven Eastaugh, ScD, put it simply: "What are your finance goals? Your finance goals aren't just to get reimbursed at cost. Your finance goals are to stay state-of-the-art."

Select speaker presentations are available on the *Members Only* section of ACCC's website [www.accc-cancer.org](http://www.accc-cancer.org).



Annual Clinical Research Award recipient David H. Johnson, MD, (center) pictured with ACCC Executive Director Christian G. Downs, JD, MHA, (left) and ACCC President Richard B. Reiling, MD, FACS (right). Dr. Johnson, was honored for his extensive research, leadership, and commitment to individuals with lung and breast cancers. His luncheon address explored the challenging—and sometimes controversial—issues facing practicing oncologists in the 21st century, including the rising cost of cancer care, the quality of that care, and ethical and conflict of interest concerns.

## ACCC Welcomes its Newest Members

- Bothwell Regional Health Center, Cancer Care of Central Missouri, Sedalia, Mo.
- Chesapeake General Hospital, Sidney Oman Cancer Center, Chesapeake, Va.
- Clinton Memorial Hospital, Foster J. Boyd, MD Regional Cancer Center, Wilmington, Ohio
- Community Cancer Center, Normal, Ill.
- Froedtert & Medical College of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, Wisc.
- Geisinger Health System, Danville, Pa.
- Hope Center, Terre Haute, Ind.
- Ironwood Cancer and Research Center, Chandler, Ariz.
- Northwest Community Hospital, Arlington Heights, Ill.
- Norton Healthcare, Inc., Norton Cancer Institute, Louisville, Ky.
- The George Washington University Cancer Institute, Washington, D.C.
- Albert Einstein Medical Center, Cancer Center, Philadelphia, Pa.
- Barnes-Jewish St. Peters Hospital, Siteman Cancer Center, St. Peters, Mo.
- Bozeman Deaconess Cancer Center, Bozeman, Mont.
- San Diego Pacific Oncology and Hematology Assoc. Inc., La Jolla, Calif.
- South Suburban Oncology, Quincy, Mass.
- Southwest Oklahoma Cancer Centers, Lawton, Okla.
- St. Alexius Medical Center, The Cancer Institute at Alexian Brothers Hospital Network, Hoffman Estates, Ill.
- University of South Alabama – Mitchell Cancer Institute, Mobile, Ala.
- Valley View Hospital Cancer Center, Glenwood Springs, Colo.