



## The Value of ACCC Membership

### Here's what your peers are saying about ACCC...

"The idea of creating the position of a patient financial advocate at Mountain States Tumor Institute stemmed from an article in *Oncology Issues*. Return on investment was immediate."

—*Jessie Modlin, PharmD, St. Luke's Mountain States Tumor Institute, Boise, Idaho*

"We participated in ACCC's Cancer Program Improvement Project. Our staff immediately created an action plan based on information presented at the one-day seminar. In one year's time we went from an 88 percent error rate in charge capture to less than 10 percent. Today, we are capturing 95 percent of all available charges."

—*Connie Selle, CPht, RPht, HealthEast Cancer Care and Pharmacy Services, Maplewood, Minnesota*

"ACCC is a strong advocate for the entire cancer care team when it comes to working with CMS and Congress on issues of patient access to quality cancer care."

—*Susan Wright, Cancer Program Information Coordinator, Hartford Hospital Cancer Program, Helen & Gray Cancer Center, Hartford, Connecticut*

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## Back to the Future

by Christian Downs, JD, MHA

Back in high-school most of us took an aptitude test to figure out what career fields we might be interested in pursuing after graduation. I remember this test being an all-day event. We filled in those circles with our No. 2 pencils. We wrote down the subjects that we enjoyed in school. And we looked at countless diagrams to demonstrate our spatial relations skills. Destiny arrived several months later in the form of an envelope from the company that compiled the data. Having spoken to a few of my classmates, I knew that the results were pretty specific: Fireman, Nurse, Accountant, etc. Opening my letter, I distinctly remember the two word career suggestion that greeted me... Fish Farmer.

Now I loved to fish, but doing it on a corporate scale was not something I had ever considered—especially for a career. Looking back, that aptitude test offered a good lesson about predicting the future and how difficult that can be.

In this *Oncology Issues* we focus on the future of oncology care. As we often do at ACCC, we try to throw a little science in with the economics and management of cancer delivery. We think this practice offers a more accurate indication of the future of cancer care than merely looking at one piece in isolation.

Starting off, Dr. Lee Newcomer of UnitedHealthcare provides several thought-provoking anecdotes from the payer's perspective. In his article, Dr. Newcomer discusses exactly what insurers are looking for from providers—adherence to evidence-based medicine and clinical guidelines and an awareness and consideration of the "cost" of cancer treatment.

On the other side of the equation, Dr. Barbara McAneny presents

the physician perspective, discussing some of the challenges facing practicing oncologists now and in the future. In addition to limitations and barriers to using evidence-based medicine and clinical guidelines, she writes about the struggle for adequate reimbursement of services provided.

To complete the series, Matt Sherer looks at the future of cancer care from the cancer program administrator's perspective. His message is this: No Margin, No Mission! In addition, he

makes practical suggestions for how non-profit providers can work with for-profit payers to make sure patients continue to get the best and most appropriate treatment possible.

Our look into the future of cancer care carries over to our technology articles as well, including an update on an important clinical trial comparing whole breast

to partial breast irradiation and a discussion about virtual thoracic surgery.

For those programs that have a breast care center or women's health center in their future, as well as existing breast care or women's health programs that want to ensure their economic and programmatic future, we offer another series of articles on model breast care programs. In the future, you will likely see similar articles on tumor site centers of excellence in prostate, colon, and lung cancers.

Personally this *Oncology Issues* serves as a reminder of how bright our future is in oncology care. Innovative medicines and treatments, dedicated and caring providers, and a financing system that—while not perfect—provide us an opportunity to care (and hopefully cure) our patients.

And for me, that is a lot more exciting and rewarding than any fish-related ventures. 🐟

