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Association of Community Cancer Centers

25th National Oncology Economics Conference

September 17-20, 2008
San Francisco, California



Preparing for the Perfect Storm

- ✓ Increased competition
- ✓ Reduced reimbursement
- ✓ Rising demand

Are you prepared to weather the storm? Learn how to protect and strengthen your cancer program. From multi-institutional joint ventures to strategies for increasing your revenue stream to innovative survivorship programs that benefit patients and staff, ACCC's conference offers sessions for hospital- and practice-based cancer programs.

Stay tuned for details at:
www.accc-cancer.org/mainevent



Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House

by Christian Downs, JD, MHA

Recently, I saw a great movie called *Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House*. The Blandings live in a tiny apartment in New York City. The family decides to move to the country only to find out that buying, building, and living in their “dream” home is easier said than done.

Here's the plot: Mr. Blandings works as a New York ad executive, and in his quest for more and “better” space, he decides to move his family to the Connecticut suburbs and build himself a house. He runs into a series of comical situations, from mortgages, to lawsuits, to construction overruns. Invariably his carefully planned construction schedule and budget escalate out of control. One of the best scenes is where Blandings hires a contractor to dig a well for water. The contractor digs and digs to around 200 feet—with each foot costing a little more money. They never find water. But a few days later and only a few feet away, another contractor digs a hole and the basement floods. Haven't we all been there?

Three of the feature articles in this *Oncology Issues* focus on new construction: planning and obtaining buy-in from administration and staff; the actual construction process; and creating a healing environment that benefits patients and staff.

A good place to start is the question: Is it *really* hammer time? Ted Wolfe, whose experience in program construction is formidable, looks at the cornerstones of strategic planning for new construction. These include establishing a multidisciplinary team, using patient and marketplace data, and developing accurate and complete financial projections. He stresses that

completing your homework is *critical* before even thinking of “swinging a hammer.”

Next, Doug Infelt offers some practical tips for working with your cancer program design team. As an architect, Doug knows that open communication, staff and patient input into design, and realistic budget expectations (what, no 5,000-gallon aquarium?) are essential to design success.

Finally, for those of you considering new construction—or facility redesign—Myra Fouts and Diane Gabay talk about the importance of “healing through evidence-based design.” They provide the background you need to make the business case for building or designing a healing environment that can benefit patients and staff alike. We wanted to provide you with a real-world example, so maybe you can learn from the experience of your peers at Cedars-Sinai Outpatient Cancer Center in Los Angeles.



As we all know, construction (particularly road construction) is an ongoing activity in this country. Our hope is that this issue of ACCC's journal can offer some assistance to cancer programs as they go into the challenging and often stressful arena of building or redesigning a community cancer center. For those of you who are now knee deep in your own construction, take heart. As you struggle with a particularly problematic issue, and you are wondering if anyone has ever faced such a challenge, pick up a copy of *Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House*. And if you think your construction problems are new, take a look at the release date of the movie. 1948 🍹

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