

On Leadership

by Ernest R. Anderson, Jr., MS, RPh

I have the honor of being the first pharmacist to serve as ACCC President. During my tenure as President, I would like to emphasize the theme of leadership.

By way of introduction, I would like to tell you why I believe ACCC plays a key role in the care of cancer patients and why I chose to become involved with the Association some five years ago. At that time, the implementation of the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003 was just beginning. As the pharmacy director at Lahey Clinic, I was concerned about the rapid changes that were taking place in reimbursement for medications under Medicare's Hospital Outpatient Prospective Payment System (OPPS). As both a leader and administrator in the area of hospital pharmacy practice, I felt a responsibility to help other pharmacy administrators—my colleagues—understand the momentous changes underway within Medicare. At that time, most pharmacy administrators were unaware of these changes and their potential impact on the hospital outpatient service area.

As a member of the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP), I also was fortunate to have participated in the ASHP Public Policy Council for four years. This council often reviewed federal policy issues and participated in several visits to Capitol Hill. My contributions to the ASHP Public Policy Council were informed by my understanding of how the MMA would impact the OPPS and its consequent impact on the areas of pharmacy budget and pharmacy practice. Chemotherapy, biotherapy, and adjunctive therapy comprise over 60 percent of the total drug spend each year. Further, given

that most chemotherapy is administered in the outpatient clinic setting, reimbursement for this service is a key factor in both pharmacy budget and practice planning.

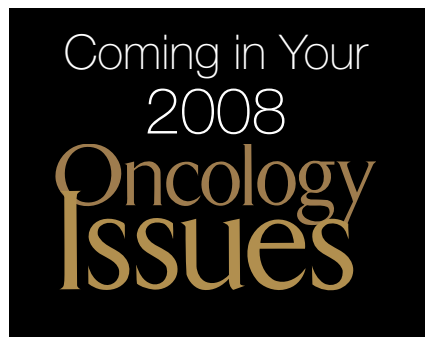


Through my involvement with ASHP's Public Policy Council, I became aware of ACCC's advocacy work on hospital outpatient department reimbursement. I found that ACCC had a strong advocacy position in Washington, D.C., and that the Association had both qualified staff and the resources to effect changes at CMS and in congress.

Although ACCC's membership is uniquely multidisciplinary, pharmacists had not played a large role in the organization. That situation was about to change. I soon found myself involved with ACCC working on issues related to drug reimbursement. Through ACCC, over the past four years, I have had the privilege of testifying before the Ambulatory Payment Classification (APC) Panel several times. In working with the Association on these issues, I have found that ACCC is the one organization that best advocates on the Medicare issues that affect *all* of us.

Which brings me back to my theme—Leadership. My personal leadership growth has come in part by trial and error in my role as a pharmacy administrator. It has also come from being a student of the leadership literature. Opportunities with organizations such as ACCC and ASHP have afforded me the privilege to use some of the leadership skills I have learned over the years.

One lesson I've learned about leadership is that you never "arrive." Leadership means there is always more to learn. At the same time, leadership means putting what you're learning into practice. ☐



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