



Playing for the Same Team

by Christian Downs, JD, MHA

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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We live in a sports-oriented culture, and it's interesting to see how often sports metaphors spill over into non-sports arenas. For example, look at how we put “jerseys” on everybody and everything—Democrats and Republicans, north and south, urban and rural. Pick your team and get your jersey.

We even wear these “jerseys” in cancer care—medical oncologists and radiation oncologists, Gamma Knife® and Cyberknife®, professional navigators and lay navigators. For many years, cancer providers either played for the hospital or practice “team.” And sometimes these two “teams” or care settings seemed to work in almost parallel universes.

For the practice “team,” the entrepreneurial spirit of the physician group practice allowed for care to be delivered locally and with an emphasis on “customer service.” At the same time, the hospital “team” was creating innovative methods of treating cancer patients by offering such services as psychosocial assistance, nutrition support, and survivorship planning.

Then the rules of the game began to change. In the last five years or so, we've started to see a new level of cooperation between these two “teams.” And the change has benefited everyone—particularly our cancer patients.

In this issue, Teri Guidi provides an overview of the main differences in rules and regulations as they apply to the hospital outpatient department and the physician office setting. And while it may sometimes seem as though one care setting operates from Team Mars and the other from Team Venus, we now know that what

is going on in both care settings is important for everyone to understand—regardless of where we deliver or receive cancer care.

Authors Ketan Patel and Patrick Grusenmeyer write about “Integrating Hospital-based Pharmacists in a Private Medical Oncology Office,” demonstrating that by cooperating across sites of service, programs can realize tangible benefits including increased patient safety, standardized chemotherapy regimens, and improved drug inventory management and purchasing. Clearly, this type of joint venture



benefits the hospital, the private practice, *and* the cancer patient.

Also in this issue, we feature an article about the National Cancer Institute Community Cancer Centers Program (NCCCP) pilot and how it is bringing tools and resources to community-based programs. By sharing best practices across *all* sites, the NCCCP program hopes to help increase patient accrual into clinical trials, reduce healthcare disparities, and increase adherence to evidence-based practice guidelines.

And in yet another example of practices and hospitals working together to improve care, we have an update on ACCC's *Prostate Cancer Project*. Working closely with five model programs made up of both hospital-based cancer programs and physician practices, we are identifying best practices in developing a prostate-specific care program that will be shared with all ACCC members.

So back to our sports analogy. It seems that no matter what “jersey” we wear, most cancer care providers are actually playing on the same “team.” And that is good news for our cancer patients. 🏈