



## 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 & Harry Gray Cancer Center,  
Hartford, Connecticut

**Join today!**  
[www.accc-cancer.org](http://www.accc-cancer.org)

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## A Value Proposition

by Christian Downs, JD, MHA

Top value. Those two words came to my mind as we wrapped up ACCC's 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Hospital Summit in December. The gathered hospital leadership talked strategy, listened to an extraordinary analysis of current and future trends in cancer care, and learned how to best position their programs in 2010.



The good news in 2010 is that many hospital cancer programs appear to be positioned for success. Hospital-based programs enjoy more diversified revenue streams and service lines than community practices. And despite the recession, a majority of cancer programs characterize their financial status as good or very good, according to a preliminary analysis from ACCC's Cancer Care Trends in the Community Hospital 2009 survey.

"Overall oncology is a bright spot for most hospitals. The magnitude of the challenges varies market to market. Recession impacts are largely regional," said speaker Allison Cuff Shimooka, MBA, managing director of the Advisory Board's Oncology Roundtable. Summit attendees received a valuable "Oncology State of the Union" assessment from Ms. Shimooka that evaluated the impact of the recession and reform on the business of cancer care.

Still, many projects are on hold until capital opens up. "How will hospitals fund capital growth if they can't borrow it? They will have to earn it," said Shimooka. Operating margins are essential to fund future growth. She cautioned that the future of oncology is clouded by an "underlying sense of trepidation."

This may be especially true for oncology practices. Presenter Lee Blansett, MBA, of Kantar Health, noted that ACCC's survey data for 2009 show an increase in patients

being referred to hospitals for chemotherapy treatment from 11 percent in 2007 to 18 percent in 2009. "Community practices' referrals to hospitals are rising," Blansett said. "If practices can't afford to treat, they will refer."

Insight. Benchmarking data. Strategic solutions. Hospital Summit attendees received all

these and more from expert presenters. The trend analysis presented by the Oncology Roundtable was alone worth the price of admission. My one regret was that the entire ACCC membership was not in the room. (We would have found enough space, I promise.)

Most likely, many ACCC members couldn't attend the Hospital Summit due to decreased travel and education budgets. In this issue of the journal, author Mark Dubow points out that "hunkering down" in tough economic times seems like the prudent course. But this "safe" behavior brings real risk, including missed opportunities to better meet your community's needs.

I encourage you to realize the "value" available to you at ACCC's meetings. Start by checking out the agenda for the ACCC's 36<sup>th</sup> Annual National Meeting, March 17-20, 2010, that mailed with this issue of the journal. Tell your team members to view the agenda online at [www.accc-cancer.org/](http://www.accc-cancer.org/). Recognize the added value of attending the one meeting designed to address issues your program will face today and tomorrow.

The business side of cancer care is evolving fast: healthcare reform, rising costs of drugs and technologies, and regional personnel shortages. Keep yourself and your team current. Take advantage of the top value meetings and educational programs that ACCC offers. 📖