

Passion for the Dance

by Tom Whittaker, MD, FACP

Passion. Passion for caring for patients. Passion for high quality of cancer care. Passion is truly the force driving the Association of Community Cancer Centers, the leading education and advocacy organization for the cancer team. ACCC's more than 17,000 members and nearly 700 member programs from across the country all share a passion for making access to and the scope and delivery of care better for their patients. And at ACCC's Rockville, Maryland, headquarters, the Association's 28 staff members are equally passionate about the content and delivery of ACCC's message on advocacy and education. Together, ACCC members and staff are passionate about creating an organizational culture based on honesty, integrity, and transparency. What an amazing and productive organization we have in ACCC.

I am truly humbled to have the opportunity to serve you in the coming year as President. I am also humbled by the examples of leadership set by my predecessors. Their recent Presidential themes for ACCC have included Survivorship, Leadership, the Oncology Workforce Shortage Crisis, and Data Collection in the Community Setting. To build on their themes and continue their legacy, my President's theme for the coming year is "The Oncology Medical Home."

The medical home is a new care concept currently being piloted in primary care with the goal of comprehensive, coordinated, and personalized care. With improved therapies and outcomes in oncology, we frequently have chronic care relationships with our patients and also



assume many of their primary care responsibilities. How can we help transform the mission of our oncology practices and of our institutions to assume ownership of all the patient's cancer-related needs? How can we help optimize outcomes while streamlining treatment and personalizing care?

Core tenets of a medical home include:

- Comprehensive care delivery
- Improved patient engagement
- Enhanced patient access
- Coordination of care across the continuum
- Use of all disciplines of the care team
- Practice-wide quality measurements and improvements.

ACCC has been and continues to be a vocal advocate on all of these issues. The Oncology Medical Home brings all of these tenets under one umbrella. I hope that we will be able to help define what the Oncology Medical Home is, and also educate our members and the entire oncology community on its structure and benefits. High-quality personalized care will have tremendous value as cancer care continues to improve and evolve.

When I think of our entire Association—the membership, leadership, and staff—I am reminded of a saying attributed to Angela Monet: "Those who danced were thought to be quite insane by those who could not hear the music." I am thrilled to be a part of an Association where we all "hear the music," and where we help so many others to "hear the music." As your President, I promise to continue the dance and to dance with passion. 🎵

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