

# The Journey Together

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**W**e are a part of the greatest specialty in medicine: Oncology. When you dig through the many distractions and obstacles to care, at the end

of the day it is still a remarkable and rewarding position that our patients entrust to us. They ask us to care for them at a most vulnerable time in their lives, and happily we are able to celebrate with more and more of them through survivorship than ever before.


At the same time, we are seeing evolutionary change in our care setting and practices due to enormous economic pressures. Among the stressors are the high cost of technology, decreasing reimbursement, increasing regulation, increasing cost of treatment, and increasing patient volumes—many of whom may be uninsured or underinsured. It is anticipated that the overall demand for oncology services will increase by over 40 percent by the year 2020.

We will likely need revolutionary changes in our care settings to meet the need. Already we are in an era of mergers and consolidations that are making private practice community oncology a dwindling entity. Will this shift help or compound the challenges of meeting the upcoming care demands? Will the changes that occur be evolutionary or revolutionary?

While these challenges are framed by uncertainty, we do know that oncology care providers have always been a resourceful group. We have worked through the challenges of the past decades and have managed to dramatically improve the quality and science of the care we deliver. I have no doubt that we will continue down that same path.

Over the past three decades, ACCC has been a vital resource in that journey, and the Association will continue to offer resources, support, and answers to the entire cancer team no matter what the future brings. ACCC's ever-expanding educational programs and advocacy efforts will help us through the changes—whether evolutionary or revolutionary—that lie ahead.

For the journey ahead, I am grateful for ACCC. What a wonderful and unique organization we have! Members who are passionate about great cancer care. Staff who are passionate about providing the education and advocacy work to make all of our programs and institutions thrive, and an organization that values the work and input of the entire cancer team. It is with more than a tinge of sadness that I become "Past President" of this unique organization. I thank you for allowing me the opportunity of personal and professional growth in leading ACCC over the past year. I have enjoyed every moment.

Now it is time to look forward to the future and all we can do with ACCC. Let's make cancer care better together. 

## Coming in Your 2012 ONCOLOGY ISSUES

- ▶ Cancer Rehabilitation and STAR Certification
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- ▶ Meeting the Fertility-Related Needs of Cancer Patients
- ▶ Clinical Pharmacists—Care and Collaboration in the Community Cancer Center
- ▶ Training Nurses for Survivorship Care
- ▶ Two Model Cancer Survivorship Programs: TACTIC and THRIVE
- ▶ Physician Employment: Everyone's Doing it—Successfully?
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