

# ISSUES

## The Future Is Now

BY MATTHEW FARBER, MA



Last year ACCC launched its new Institute for the Future of Oncology initiative. The ultimate goal is to grow the Institute into a clearinghouse of information and resources designed to help ACCC members tackle issues they will face over the next 5–10 years. On any given day, oncology providers face challenges related to market consolidation and shifts in site of service, reimbursement and regulatory changes, implementation of new technology into community practice, and more. ACCC's Institute for the Future of Oncology is one resource that can help.

In June 2013 ACCC held the inaugural Institute forum, which helped to generate two white papers that delineated key challenges in the oncology landscape and possible next steps—"Opportunities & New Realities in Cancer Care: Oncologist & Hospital Integration in the ACA Era" and "Cancer Care in the Age of Electronic Health

Information Exchange." Both are available online at [www.accc-cancer.org/institute](http://www.accc-cancer.org/institute).

This year's Institute forum, held in June 2014, built on last year's discussion, focusing on two vital areas for the future of oncology care: Organization Leadership and Communicating Quality.

At the June forum, participants discussed:


- Planning for the future success of an organization and oncology leadership's role in decision making regarding services offered to patients
- Analyzing future needs and assimilating new and evolving technologies and treatment trends (e.g., oncolytics, immunotherapy, molecular testing, genetics, advances in radiation therapy)
- Addressing leadership succession planning and mentoring tomorrow's leaders.

The following questions helped frame the discussion: *Who are the current decision makers and, looking ahead, who are the future decision makers likely to be? How will new and evolving therapies be evaluated for inclusion in service lines offered in the community? What strategic planning approaches will lead to successful adoption of new therapies and protection of patient access?*

In the conversation on Communicating Quality, we examined how expectations vary among different stakeholders

(patients, payers, and providers) and explored how quality is being communicated to these diverse groups by brainstorming the following questions:

- How is quality successfully communicated to various stakeholders (payers, patients, other providers)?
- What are the key takeaways for stakeholders in discussing quality care?
- How do cancer care providers successfully demonstrate that they are providing quality care to their patients?
- What measures and metrics are being used to communicate quality in oncology?
- How can we use health information exchange, patient portals, and other emerging technologies to communicate quality?

From these discussions, as in 2013, ACCC will develop two white papers that will provide unique perspectives on these areas of critical importance to the future of oncology care. In the meantime, ACCC's Institute for the Future of Oncology is seeking to identify future topics of interest to the greater oncology community. If you have thoughts on what these future topics should be or if you are interested in learning more about this initiative, contact me at: [mfarber@accc-cancer.org](mailto:mfarber@accc-cancer.org). 

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