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**FROM THE EDITOR****Don't Just Bloviate, Innovate!**

BY CHRISTIAN DOWNS, JD, MHA



A few years ago I was at a meeting on the future of cancer care. We had reached the point where everything had been said about the issue, but not everyone had said it. A woman who had sat quietly in the audience while most of us bloviated (Google that one!) eventually spoke up. She said one factor we were ignoring was the cost of innovation. Not just the financial cost, but the time and energy it takes to manage innovation. Then she added that this cost is one we cannot cut or ignore. Rather we must absorb the cost to improve patient care.

Her words were on my mind as I reviewed this edition of *Oncology Issues* and thought about where ACCC, as an organization, is headed.

The theme of innovation is woven throughout this issue.

For example, the cover story features Temple University Hospital Cancer Center's electronic dosimetry whiteboard. This program received a 2013 ACCC Innovator Award for this tool, which improved a very busy radiation oncology service line by increasing transparency, improving staff communication, ensuring accountability, and streamlining work distribution. Even better, this innovative, low-cost tool improved staff morale and increased physician and patient satisfaction.

In another feature article, Hematology Oncology Associates of Central New York shared its innovative solution for patients who are prescribed oral oncolytics. This practice invested time and resources to put together a team to create, implement, and then execute a physician dispensing platform for these therapies and other supportive medications. Today, The Patient Rx Center serves medical and radiation service lines at multiple locations.

While ACCC member programs are always innovating, so is the Association itself. This year ACCC will launch three exciting

initiatives.

One will be an expansion of ACCC's Oncology Pharmacy Education Network (OPEN). Many of you are familiar with OPEN and its goal of helping providers better understand the oncology pharmacy. This fall, ACCC will host a series of meetings to highlight the latest trends in oncology pharmacy—in other words all the information that providers need to know to get the most out of this service line.

The second initiative builds on ACCC's popular Financial Advocacy and Assistance education program. ACCC will host a series of regional meetings around the country, bringing together the latest tools and resources to help its member programs support their cancer patients and deal with the rising cost of cancer treatment.

Finally, this year, a group of dedicated volunteers and ACCC staff have started a new program aimed specifically at the Association's office-based practice members. This group is developing programs around communication, integration, and practice management that will look to preserve the country's cancer care delivery infrastructure.

If you are interested in discovering how community providers are innovating every day, you must secure a place at the upcoming ACCC 31st National Oncology Conference in San Diego, Oct. 8–11. In addition to presentations from the 2014 ACCC Innovator Award winners, you will find dozens of sessions offering the tools and resources your program needs to take on the challenge of innovation and succeed.

The cost of innovation is something we cannot ignore. Instead we must invest the time, resources, and energy to be successful—for our programs and our patients. Luckily, ACCC is here to help. 