



Association of Community Cancer Centers

ONCOLOGY ISSUES

The Journal of the
Association of Community Cancer Centers

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FROM THE EDITOR

Construction Zone Ahead: Hard Hats Required!

BY CHRISTIAN DOWNS, JD, MHA



My boys love to go and watch the construction of the super structures being built here in the Washington, D.C., area. From the massive “The Wharf” project that seeks to revitalize the old

southwest D.C. waterfront to the area’s first casino at the National Harbor, there is so much to see—cranes, bulldozers, welders, and masons. It’s easy to get overwhelmed in all of the action and to lose sight of the magnitude of what you’re actually seeing, specifically the conceptualization, financing, planning, and engineering behind the construction.

Similar to the construction projects in our nation’s capital, many cancer programs around the country are also in a construction mode. Maybe not bricks and mortar, but working on their programs to improve the delivery of care to their patients. In this edition of *Oncology Issues*, we focus on the building, bridging, connecting, and engaging “construction” elements at four 2016 ACCC Innovator Award-winning programs.

First, in “Building a Palliative Care Program from the Inside Out,” read, step-by-step, the approach Kaufman Cancer Center employed to grow and enhance existing services to offer early palliative care at their program, including holding weekly palliative care case conferences and developing in-house palliative care specialists.

Next, in “Telehealth—Connecting Patients with Nutrition Services,” Baton Rouge General Medical Center Pennington Cancer Center shares how it uses telehealth technology to ensure that patients at multiple clinic locations have seamless access to nutrition services, removing barriers to care, such as transportation and multiple appointments.

In our third feature article, Outer Banks

Hospital outlines its successful HPV outreach and education campaign in “HPV Vaccination—Engaging Community Partners for Success.” Those in the oncology community understand that HPV vaccination of our children is an important cancer prevention opportunity, but the issue is now becoming a public health priority. As always, we find ACCC member programs at the forefront of these efforts, with this 2016 ACCC Innovator Award winner sharing the “how to’s” of its strategic approach, which led to improved HPV vaccination rates in local schools.

Finally, in “Bridging the Gap—Early Detection of Cancer for the Medically Underserved,” learn how Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center’s innovative early detection and prevention education program is working to reduce cancer mortality and improve health equity among vulnerable patient populations. Key to this community-based program: patient navigators that connect at-risk patients to resources and support, ensuring follow-up for all patients with abnormal findings.

New construction—and all the change it brings—can be a challenge. And right now, with the election of President Trump and the move to a Republican-led Congress, we are facing four years of possible new construction (or even “deconstruction”) on the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Will this landmark legislation be abolished entirely? Or will it merely undergo a major renovation? Learn the latest at the ACCC Annual Meeting, CANCERSCAPE, March 29-31, 2017, in Washington, D.C. Register today at accc-cancer.org/CANCERSCAPE. 