

Looking Back

BY MARK S. SOBERMAN, MD, MBA, FACS



It has been a year of turmoil and uncertainty for cancer care providers. Political battles and ideological disagreements have the potential to diminish the percentage of

Americans with health insurance, threatening their access to care. The transition from fee-for-service, volume-based reimbursement to value-based reimbursement has progressed in fits and starts. New cancer treatments, though offering the hope of better outcomes and improved survival, came with increased cost and previously unheard-of toxicities. Patient financial challenges loom large, even coining a new phrase in the cancer lexicon—*financial toxicity*. At the same time, the cancer workforce faces unprecedented shortages; in so many ways, we are pressed to do more with less.


It would be easy enough to be discouraged by the various challenges we face as cancer care providers. However, experience has taught me that when faced with challenges, healthcare professionals respond with imagination, innovation, and dedication.

The theme of my year as ACCC president has been “Envisioning the Next Generation Multidisciplinary Cancer Care Team.” As we explored this theme at our national meetings and the Institute for the Future of Oncology, I have consistently been impressed and encouraged by the creative ideas and solutions proposed by our diverse group of stakeholders to address the challenges of workforce shortages, the increasing complexity of care,

the cost of care, new reimbursement systems, and the imperative to improve communication and coordination among care team members.

It is estimated that ACCC members care for 65 percent of the cancer patients in the United States. At the 2017 ACCC National Oncology Conference in Nashville this past year, one of our keynote speakers stated that it was a privilege to care for patients with cancer. I echo that sentiment. This is my last column as ACCC president, and it has been an honor and privilege to serve as its president for the past year.

ACCC is a remarkable organization that includes a large, diverse, and uniquely representative group of stakeholders. The engagement and passion that this membership brings to the issues surrounding cancer care is truly energizing and gratifying. For that, I thank you all. I am also grateful for the leadership and engagement of our board of trustees and executive committee, who generously give their time in support of ACCC. I would be remiss if I did not thank incredibly dedicated and professional staff of the ACCC, who provide superlative support to the elected officers and trustees of the organization and to the membership at large. They truly make it the effective association that it is, and they are the heart and soul of ACCC.

I do not have a crystal ball, so I do not know exactly what cancer care will look like in the years to come. What I do know is that together we are stronger, smarter, and more resilient. ACCC will continue to be a platform for collaboration that helps us all to envision a future that will create value for and improve the lives of our patients. Thank you, and I look forward to seeing what comes in the next year. 

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- ▶ A Perfect Fit: Mentoring Experienced RNs to Meet Oncology Clinic Demand
- ▶ Patient Care Connect—Lay Navigators Improve Quality and Reduce Cost of Care
- ▶ Designed for Success: A Research-Based Approach to Meet OCM Requirements
- ▶ Beyond the Classroom: Students Improve Access to Supportive Care Services
- ▶ Geriatric Oncology Ambulatory Care Clinics
- ▶ Removing Barriers in Cancer Detection: Getting LDCT Lung Cancer Screening to Work Within a Network
- ▶ Improving the Care of Pediatric Radiation Oncology Patients
- ▶ Expanding Our Reach: How Our Neuro-oncology Team Provides Next-Gen Cancer Care