

ONCOLOGY ISSUES

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FROM THE EDITOR

Extending Our Conversations Beyond Live Meetings

BY MARK LIU, MHA



I recently had the opportunity to attend two oncology conferences: the 2023 Academy of Oncology Nurse and Patient Navigator Midyear Conference and the Getting Our Fair SHARE 2023 Conference to End Health Disparities. I


enjoyed connecting in-person with those in the room and with others virtually about how to make greater impact and reach more patients among the diverse populations we serve. The energetic dialogue and inspiring stories are exactly why I know I have found my calling working in oncology. Reflecting on what I learned at these two meetings and how it aligns with the 2023-2024 ACCC President's Theme, (Re)building the Oncology Workforce to Deliver the Next Generation of Cancer Care, it is clear that patient navigation is key to helping us deliver care that is more person-centered, more coordinated, and more equitable.

Meanwhile preparation for the ACCC 40th National Oncology Conference (#NOC), Oct. 4-6, in Austin, Texas, is well underway. It is a meeting I always look forward to and this year is no exception. Several sessions have already caught my attention, for example, the work that 2023 ACCC Innovator Award Winners Rochester Regional Health - Lipson Cancer Institute is doing to embed counseling in oncology and patient care clinics and Orlando Health Cancer Institute is doing to leverage technology to improve patient triage and evaluation. From my own organization, Mount Sinai Health System, another 2023 ACCC Innovator Award winner, I look forward to hearing from radiation oncology leaders about the creation of the first advanced practice radiation therapist role in the United States and how that fits into a new model of inpatient care.

While few dispute the value of attending these types of meetings, most are asked about return on investment (ROI). A key ROI indicator is when important conversations are extended beyond the in-person meeting. And ACCC is doing just that in this edition of *Oncology Issues*.

The "Trending Now in Cancer Care: Part I" article, pages 11-30, summarizes all the great conversation and ideas from the deep dive workshops this past March at the ACCC 50th Annual Meeting & Cancer Center Business Summit (#AMCCBS). These facilitated discussions and the resultant ideas will help us all in our short- and long-term strategic planning.

Continuing the topic of trends, the chemotherapy drug shortage is a critical challenge facing the oncology community right now. On June 14, ACCC released an official statement on this issue, "encouraging members to report any drug shortages to the FDA. The more reports the agency receives, the better understanding it will have of where these shortages are occurring. Shortage notifications and updates may be reported to the FDA at drugshortages@fda.hhs.gov." Meanwhile, as we look for long-term solutions, also in June, ACCC partnered with the Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association and the Association of VA Hematology/Oncology in a virtual round table where experienced pharmacists explored the management of drug shortages, offered valuable perspectives, and shared actionable plans to tackle these shortages. If you missed this event, watch the recording at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tPHFijlooDQ>.

As our organizations continue to be agile in evaluating and navigating the current drug shortage, I want to thank all pharmacists for their monumental efforts. Remember: we are in this together and should continue to share resources and strategies with each other through venues like ACCCeXchange, ACCC's member-only listserv at acc-cancer.org. 

References

1. Association of Community Cancer Centers. ACCC Statement on Chemotherapy Drug Shortages. Published June 14, 2023. Accessed June 23, 2023. <https://www.acc-cancer.org/home/news-media/news-releases/news-template/2023/06/14/acc-statement-on-chemotherapy-drug-shortages>