

The President's Corner...

ACCC'S PRESENT AND FUTURE CHALLENGES



As each Annual Meeting of the Association of Community Cancer Centers draws to a close, I have found myself both inspired and subdued. This year has been no exception. I continue to be inspired by the support, ideas, dedication, and energy that flow from our members across the country. There is a certain synergy that seems to develop at each annual meeting which is catalyzed by the various components of the multidisciplinary team that assembles in Washington, DC, each year. One cannot help but be infected with the enthusiasm of this Association's membership as it tackles its role as an advocate of cancer patients and their families.

At the same time, however, I am always subdued by the enormity of the tasks that remain before us. This point is illustrated time after time by the issues that speaker after speaker addresses.

As the 1988 Association year unfolds, several important ongoing tasks will be continued and strengthened:

● **ACCC Standards.** Work will be proceeding on the ACCC's standards for community cancer centers, which have been under development for several years. Two final standards with respect to cancer education programs and public education were added by the ACCC House of Delegates at this year's meeting. The ACCC standards, which will be used as a self-assessment tool, are currently being field tested and a completed tool is expected to be available by year's end.

● **Reimbursement Policies.** Reimbursement issues will be pursued with vigor. The Association, with support from multiple sources, is expanding its efforts in this area to include unions, health care purchasers and consumer groups in a series of conferences. It is

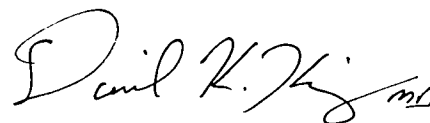
the Association's intent to develop reimbursement initiatives involving policymakers, as well as the health care industry. Proposed initiatives that will be examined during the next year include the rating of insurers' cancer care coverage, the drafting of proposed insurance policy language on cancer treatment reimbursement, the continued collection of data on reimbursement variations, and the cost-effectiveness of clinical trials and new technologic innovations in cancer treatment.

● **Government Relations.** Legislative initiatives will continue to be pursued, beginning with an upcoming Congressional hearing this spring on CCOPs and the 1988 budget for the National Cancer Institute. The Association will also continue to promote ongoing communications between its membership and their respective Congressional representatives.

● **Clinical Indicators.** The select core committee that is developing clinical indicators of quality care will vigorously pursue its 1988 objectives. Validation of preliminary indicators is to begin soon, with many of the Association's members participating in field testing. Our progress in this area will be shared with the JCAHO oncology task force.

All of the above challenges will be discussed in this and subsequent issues of the *Journal of Cancer Program Management*.

In short, 1988 promises to be a banner year for ACCC. Its membership and its influence continue to grow, and it will continue to pursue policies that strengthen its cancer patient advocacy role.



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President