



Association News

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HCFA Expresses Interest in ACCC Drug Bulletin

ACCC was invited to meet with Robert Wren, Director of the Office of Coverage Policy at the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) to provide HCFA staff with background information on the development of its quarterly publication, the *ACCC Compendia-Based Drug Bulletin*.

ACCC Executive Director, Lee E. Mortenson, D.P.A., Delegate Representative, A. Collier Smyth, M.D., and *Bulletin* Editor, Marilyn Evans, provided Wren, as well as other Medicare and Medicaid staff at HCFA, with detailed information on why the *Bulletin* was created, that its content is based solely on the three authoritative drug compendia, the procedure for updating the *Bulletin*, and the ongoing review of the *Bulletin* by representatives of the three compendia.

Currently, Medicaid is required to pay for off-label drug use that is recognized by the compendia and peer-reviewed literature. However, off-label drug reimbursement for Medicare patients is left to the discretion of individual Medicare carriers.

ACCC Membership Survey Results

Hospital/physician relations, new technology, and clinical trials are the most threatened components of today's cancer programs according to this year's survey of ACCC members (39.1%, 30.5%, and 27.6% respectively).

However, when the survey results are analyzed by type of position, a higher percentage of cancer program administrative directors and other cancer care team members (i.e., nurses, data coordinators, etc.) believe that hospital/physician relations are the greatest threat to the continued functioning of their cancer programs (44.6% and 36.6% respectively) than medical oncologists/medical directors (32.3%). Overall, oncologists/medical directors view new technology as the component of a cancer program that is most at risk (43.1%).

When asked what new program elements members are planning to implement

within the next two years, 58.8 percent of all respondents indicated marketing programs, followed by screening/prevention programs (57.7 percent), recruitment of additional medical oncologists (47.7 percent) and pain/rehabilitation programs (38.4 percent).

Regardless of position, all ACCC members responding to the survey view the following areas as major problems that their institution/practice will confront over the next three years: declining reimbursement, the advent of prospective payment for ambulatory care, hospital/physician relations, increased competition in the marketplace, and funding for clinical research. Membership also indicated that the major political or legislative issues that ACCC should tackle during the coming year are reimbursement/payment reform, access to care, and funding for clinical research.

More information on the membership survey will be available after the Strategic Planning Committee has completed its analysis of the results and formulated the ACCC's goals and objectives for the 1993-1994 fiscal year.

ACCC, ONS Task Force Appointed

Robert T. Clarke, MHA, ACCC President, and Carol P. Curtiss, RN, MSN, OCN, President of the Oncology Nursing Society (ONS), have jointly established a task force composed of members from both organizations. The task force is charged to:

- Determine appropriate joint planning, liaison and reporting mechanisms between the two organizations.
- Review the strategic plans of both organizations and determine areas of mutual interest.
- Determine programs and projects where both organizations may work together.

ACCC task force members include: Lloyd K. Everson, MD, Indianapolis, IN, ACCC Immediate Past President; Luana Lamkin, RN, MPH, Honolulu, HI, ACCC Standards Committee Member; and Margaret A. Riley, MN, RN, Atlanta, GA, ACCC Board of Trustees Member and Nursing Special Interest

Group Chairperson. ONS task force members include: Carol Curtiss, RN, MSN, OCN, Greenfield, MA, ONS President; Juanita Garrison, RN, OCN, Lexington, KY, ONS Board Member; and Barbara Summers, RNCS, MSN, OCN, Fairfax, VA, ONS Administration Committee Chairperson. ACCC Executive Director, Lee E. Mortenson, DPA, and ONS Executive Director, Pearl Moore, RN, MN, will be working with the group whose first meeting is planned for September.

CRG Update

Members of the ACCC Collaborative Research Group (CRG) have been working with CIBA-GEIGY medical and clinical monitors to initiate clinical studies with Aredia™ (Pamidronate Disodium for Injection). The three studies are under way at 10 member institutions and seven patients had been enrolled at the time *Oncology Issues* went to press.

Another company has approached ACCC regarding a Phase III study in Stage IV breast cancer patients. The proposal is currently under consideration by the CRG Steering Committee.

The CRG welcomes the following new members: The Baptist Regional Cancer Center at East Tennessee Baptist Hospital, Knoxville, TN; and the Willmar Cancer Center at Rice Memorial Hospital, Willmar, MN.

AARP Members Request Patient Brochure

ACCC headquarters has received more than 2,000 written requests for its free patient brochure, *Cancer Treatments Your Insurance Should Cover*, after an announcement of its availability appeared in the June *AARP Bulletin*, published by the American Association of Retired Persons.

The brochure is co-sponsored by the Oncology Nursing Society and the National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship. Distribution and printing of the brochure are made possible through an educational grant furnished by Immunex Corp. 