



## ACCC Action

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### A NEW STANDARD

ACCC's *Standards for Cancer Programs*, revised in September to add a standard for survivorship, are helpful guidelines to new cancer programs in the development phase and to existing cancer programs that want to acquire and maintain a comprehensive multidisciplinary cancer program that meets the needs of patients with cancer and their families. The standards were developed to reflect the optimal components for a cancer program.

For a free copy of this important publication, write: *ACCC Standards*, ACCC, 11600 Nebel St. Suite 201, Rockville, MD 20852.

### COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH GROUP

The Collaborative Research Group held its semi-annual membership meeting in September. Group membership now totals 50 institutions and accrual to studies continues to grow, with a total of 119 patients on three active trials since the first site initiation in May 1992. Edith P. Mitchell, M.D., Director of Clinical Research for U.S. Bioscience, presented information to the group on seven protocols, which are being evaluated by the Steering Committee for group participation.

### PRESIDENT'S CANCER PANEL

Health care reform may unduly restrict access to chemotherapy drugs, clinical trials, and the patient's provider of choice, cautioned ACCC President Albert B. Einstein, Jr., M.D. He was speaking before the Special Commission on Breast Cancer of the President's Cancer Panel at a meeting held July 21 in Reston, Va.

Einstein reviewed ACCC efforts to promote legislation allowing breast cancer patients access to the latest effective drug therapies and prohibiting insurance providers from denying payment for drugs based on the lack of indication of the use on the FDA-approved label.

The legislation, which has been passed in 10 states and is in process in several others, requires as criteria for reimbursement the use of three major drug reference books that document effective off-label uses of approved drugs, in addition to peer-reviewed medical literature. "These state initiatives need our support.... Our patients with breast cancer need access to the latest effective drug therapy," said Einstein.

He voiced concerns that many insurance programs specifically exclude in their contracts coverage for experimental therapy. "We believe coverage for patient care on experimental protocols is justifiable because these therapies are administered as treatment for the disease

with potential benefit for the patients," he said. "The benefits of new therapies need to be easily accessed by patients, not hindered by their insurance."

The Special Commission was created following a request by the Vice President and is charged with addressing a wide range of issues affecting progress against breast cancer. This meeting was a forum for nationally recognized cancer experts to provide recommendations for national and state level action.

### ACCC'S 20TH ANNUAL NATIONAL MEETING

March 23-26, 1994  
Washington, D.C.  
*Don't miss it!*

### CAUSE FOR APPLAUSE

Proponents of the Indiana off-label legislation gather to celebrate the new law. Pictured (left to right) are State Representative Charlie Brown, the bill's primary sponsor; Cathy Peachey, representing the Breast Cancer Coalition; Robert T. Woodburn, M.D., President of

the Indiana Medical Oncology Society; Jamie Young, ACCC Director of Public Policy; Shelley Koglin, Vice-President, Indiana Division of the American Cancer Society; State Senator Tom Wyss, Senate sponsor; and John Ryan, ACCC's legislative counsel from the law firm of Ice, Miller, Donadio and Ryan.

