



ACCC's Regional Oncology Symposia Score Success

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KEEPING THE ONCOLOGY TEAM UP TO DATE

In cooperation with several state oncology societies, ACCC hosted two well-attended symposia in October. The goal was to bring together national and state leaders to provide the oncology team with information on managed care and its impact on the future of oncology research and practice. One meeting was cohosted by the Minnesota Society of Clinical Oncology and the other by the Massachusetts Society of Clinical Oncologists, Inc., and the Society of Rhode Island Clinical Oncologists, Inc. The meetings, sponsored by Ortho Biotech, Inc., were entitled "Competition, Managed Care, Capitation & Oncology."

A survey of physicians attending the meeting from Minnesota, where managed care is well established, revealed that their most important concerns are:

- increasing practice overhead
 - increasing administrative complexity
 - practice guidelines
 - barriers to cancer research
- Minnesota practice managers also

listed increasing administrative complexity as their most important concern, along with insurance issues.

However, physicians from Massachusetts and Rhode Island, where managed care is not as pervasive, listed preparing for managed care contracts and declining physician income as their major concerns.

Thirty-three percent of hospital cancer program administrators in Minnesota responded that they are bonding oncologists, compared with 54 percent nationally. Sixty-seven percent of program administrator respondents in Minnesota noted that they are upsizing their ambulatory chemotherapy center, compared with 38 percent nationally. (Thirty-three percent of program administrators in Minnesota indicated they do not have an ambulatory chemotherapy center.) And 67 percent noted they are upsizing their inpatient oncology unit, compared with 17 percent nationally.

Among hospital cancer program administrators in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, the picture is different. None indicated they are bonding oncologists. Only 20 percent noted they are upsizing their ambulatory

chemotherapy center, and 40 percent reported they are downsizing their inpatient oncology unit.

Four other oncology symposia were also held:

- November 7: Orlando, Fla.
- November 9: Pittsburgh, Pa.
- November 28: Seattle, Wash.
- December 9: Rosemont, Ill.

Each was well attended.

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY RESULTS ARE IN

The 1995 ACCC Membership Survey was mailed to members the first week of June. Approximately 6,200 surveys were distributed and 558 were returned for an overall response rate of 9 percent, a significant increase from 1994. The institutional response rate this year was 297 out of 490, a 61 percent response from ACCC's active membership. The results of this survey have been analyzed and will be published in the January/February 1996 *Oncology Issues*.

BARRIERS TO CARE STUDY

ACCC's Governmental Affairs Committee is developing a survey mechanism with support from Ortho Biotech, Inc., to measure barriers to oncology care. This project grew out of the original ad hoc committee that was formed to look into impediments to care. The goal of the study is to determine the extent to which oncology guidelines within various third-party payer settings are affecting timely patient referrals, practice patterns, and availability of appropriate treatments. By clearly identifying important issues, we can work to develop ways to minimize barriers and assure patients quality oncology care regardless of payer type. The survey will likely be piloted by the forty to fifty presidents of the various state oncology societies. ■



Meeting attendees and staff network with colleagues and "shop" the twenty-two exhibitor booths during ACCC's 12th Annual National Oncology Economics Conference. See conference story on page 33.