

Summer 2011
Volume 7 Issue 2



News

NNECOS News is an e-mail publication of Northern New England Clinical Oncology Society

8th Spring Practice Management Conference A Success

The 8th annual NNECOS Spring Practice Management Conference was held on Tuesday, May 17th at the Grappone Center in Concord, NH. The day began with the EHR and meaningful use super session, delving into ways to make the most of your EHR as both a clinical and financial tool for your practice, and what matters most in meaningful use. Next attendees selected either the “Making clinical research financially feasible” or “Providing financial counseling services in your practice – best practices and how can NNECOS help?”

The day rounded out with the “Oncology Reimbursement Update 2011” providing intensive radiation and medical oncology specific sessions for attendees.

In the words of our attendees:

- *“The discussion during the ‘EHR super Session’ was very useful.”*
- *“Excellent, well organized lots of good information, professional atmosphere, wonderful venue!”*

Special thanks to the planning committee and our presenters for making the meeting a success!

New this year, NNECOS members may access the complete meeting **e-binder** via the member-only section of our website! **Membership has its privileges!!!**



FALL PREVIEW! **2011 NNECOS Annual Meeting**

The highly anticipated 2011 NNECOS Annual Meeting at the stunning Omni Mount Washington is less than four months away! Mark your calendar and save the date today: [October 28-29, 2011!](#)

We have an outstanding array of topics and presenters lined up, with something for everyone! The program begins with [lunch on Friday](#), and offers the following tentatively scheduled Friday topics:

- Recognition and Screening of Distress in Patients with Cancer
- Are Anthracyclines a Necessary Component of Adjuvant Chemotherapy for Breast Cancer?
- Oral Chemotherapy: Tools for Safety and Compliance:
- Alternate Radiation Treatment Schedules for Breast Cancer
- Cancer Care, What is it Worth?
- Commission on Cancer Update for ACOS Hospitals
- Washington Update

Saturday, the education and networking opportunities continue with:

- How to Integrate End of Life Planning into the Treatment Plan for Incurable Cancers
- Antiemetics & Palliative Care Update
- In Breast Cancer, What is the Role of Axillary Dissection?
- Abstract Presentations
- Exercise and Cancer: Risk Reduction and Symptom Amelioration
- NNECOS QOPI Project Initiative
- Update on Melanoma
- Stereotactic Body Radiotherapy for Early Stage Lung Cancer: Current State and Future Directions



The program is scheduled to wrap-up around 4:00 PM.

A limited number of rooms are available at the group rate of just \$199 per night plus tax! Reserve your room no later than September 27th by calling 1-800-THE-OMNI and referencing the 2011 NNECOS Annual Meeting.

Check back at www.nnecos.org/events and watch for registration materials to be mailed at the end of summer - but save the date today!

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS **Submission Deadline: August 31, 2011**

The Northern New England Clinical Oncology Society seeks abstracts on hematology/oncology topics to share knowledge during the 2011 Annual Meeting, October 28-29, 2011. Physicians, nurses, mid-level providers, ancillary health care providers (psychologists, physical therapists, etc.), administrators, pharmacists, and post-



graduate trainees (fellows, residents) are eligible to submit abstracts. Abstracts previously submitted to ASCO, ASH, etc. are acceptable. Limited funding through travel and expense grants will be available. NNECOS reserves the right to review and accept submissions.

<http://nnecos.org/abstracts>

Abstract Presentation Travel and Expense Grants

In recognition of the expense involved with presentation, the NNECOS Board will be awarding a limited number of \$200 travel and expense grants to assist with expenses associated with presentation materials and travel related expenses for the

2011 Annual Meeting. First authors on an accepted abstract for poster presentation will be eligible to apply for grant funding. Meeting attendance is required. Apply at <http://nnecos.org/travelgrant>.

NNECOS at ASCO **Exhibiting for an International Audience in Chicago, IL**

With more than 32,000 physicians, researchers and healthcare professionals from over 125 countries in attendance, NNECOS was delighted to once again be a part of the State/Regional Affiliate Booth at the ASCO Annual Meeting at the McCormick Place Convention Center in Chicago, IL June 4-6, 2011. A warm, inviting space was set aside specifically for affiliate members to meet, relax, and partake in computer access to check messages, etc.

New this year, ASCO's State/Regional Affiliate Program hosted "Meet the Leader" sessions at the State Oncology Societies Booth, providing a wide range of informative topics in an intimate, interactive setting. Sessions included *Mobilizing Members to Become Advocates*; *Town & Gown Relationships: Promoting Regional Collaboration*; *Incorporating Navigators in Your Practice*; *Addressing Workforce Shortages through*



ASCO's State Oncology Societies Booth boasts a prime location at the entrance to the Oncology Professionals Hall.



NP/PA Collaboration; *Provider Payor Initiatives*; and *The Changing Environment of Private Practice*.

"NNECOS has had a strong presence in the State Oncology Societies Booth for the past several years. Leaders, past and present, make a special effort to come by to see Lori, Marty, or Angela (depending on who is representing NNECOS that year). The posters Lori creates have set the standard for the rest of the state oncology societies and serve as a starting point to share with Booth visitors why state society membership is important," Georgia Nixon, Senior Program Coordinator, ASCO State/Regional Affiliate Program.

Special thanks to ASCO for this excellent opportunity and to all who stopped by the booth to say hello!

2011 ASCO Statesmen Honored

Did you know that NNECOS leaders aren't just terrific volunteers for our region, but are dedicated to the betterment of cancer care on a national level?

The ASCO Statesman Award recognizes ASCO members for their extraordinary volunteer service, dedication, and commitment to ASCO. Recipients have given 20 years of volunteer service. At this year's ASCO Annual Meeting, two of our NNECOS leaders were among those presented with the prestigious ASCO Statesman Award.



Newly named ASCO Statesmen, Dr. J. Chris Nunnink and Dr. Daniel M. Hayes.

Congratulations to current board member Dr. J. Chris Nunnink of the Vermont Center for Cancer Medicine and past NNECOS president, Dr. Daniel M. Hayes of Maine Center for Cancer Medicine for your recognition as ASCO Statesmen.

In 2008, this prestigious award was also presented to two NNECOS leaders, immediate past president, Dr. Steven Grunberg of Fletcher Allen Health Care and current president, Dr. Denis Hammond of New Hampshire Hematology Oncology.

Thank you for representing our region so well!

PATIENT ACCESS

Visit www.nnecos.org/patientaccess for a listing of patient access and assistance programs. Send updates/additions to info@nnecos.org.

Maine Cancer Consortium Meeting

Thursday May 19th, oncology professionals from across the state of Maine gathered for the annual Maine Cancer Consortium Meeting. NNECOS member Eileen McDonald serves as the current Board Chair of the Consortium, and past president Dr. Dan Hayes addressed the group as the keynote speaker for this event which offered rich discussion about the impact of



healthcare reform on oncology in Maine. This well attended annual meeting was a great opportunity to hear about the important work in cancer control that has been done in Maine. To learn more about the work of the consortium, visit <http://www.maineconsortium.org>.



Please note our new e-mail address:

info@nnecos.org

The NH State Cancer Registry and Comparative Effectiveness Research



New Hampshire State
Cancer Registry

The New Hampshire State Cancer Registry, along with nine other states, has recently been chosen by the Centers for Disease Control's National Program of Cancer Registries (CDC/NPCR) to become a Specialized Registry for Comparative Effectiveness Research.

For many years, the NPCR has funded a cancer surveillance system, in which New Hampshire has participated, collecting standardized cancer data for 96% of the U.S. population and providing essential data and infrastructure for public health at local, state, and national levels.

The purpose of this new project is to gather supplementary data that can be used for comparative effectiveness research (CER) with the ultimate goal of improving cancer care. The CDC'S specific interests are colorectal cancer, breast cancer, and chronic myeloid leukemia, but the additional data will be collected on all cancers diagnosed from 2011.

The CDC proposes to use the enhanced dataset to answer specific questions on these three cancers, including but not limited to the following:

Colorectal cancer

- Are colorectal cancer patients tested for KRAS?
- Do they receive appropriate treatment according to the results?
- What impact does KRAS testing have on 2-3 year survival?

Rectal cancer

- Are patients receiving radiotherapy (RT) and what is the timing of RT?
- Are there disparities in the appropriate neoadjuvant use of RT?

Chronic myeloid leukemia

- Are CML patients being tested for the BCR-ABL2 gene
- Do they receive appropriate treatment according to the results?

Breast cancer

- Are women being tested appropriately for HER2, PR2, and ER?
- Do they receive appropriate treatment according to the results?

To address these and related questions, our standard registry dataset, which includes patient characteristics, tumor characteristics and first course of treatment, will be expanded to include data on biomarkers and more detailed information on systemic regimens/drugs, co-morbidities and other patient information relevant to comparative effectiveness research.

Because our cancer registry is population-based, it includes individuals of all ages, races, and ethnicities and comprehensively reflects the care that individuals receive in all communities. Therefore, research based on these data has the potential to impact all cancer patients.

As one of only ten such registries in the US, New Hampshire has a unique opportunity to contribute to comparative effectiveness research locally and nationally. Beginning June 2011 State Cancer Registry staff will be actively collecting the new information from New Hampshire hospitals, physicians, and other health care providers for cases diagnosed as of 2011.

In addition, researchers in New Hampshire and elsewhere can apply for permission to analyze NH and national CER data, and we encourage you to do so once the data are available.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions, or if you would like information on developing a research project using NHSCR data:

[Judy Rees, MD](#) is the Principal Investigator
603-653-3457 or judith.rees@dartmouth.edu.

[Maria Celaya, MPH](#) is the Project Coordinator in charge of data collection
603-653-6621 or maria.celaya@dartmouth.edu.

Bruce Riddle, PhD can answer questions on data transmission and electronic pathology laboratory reporting.

603-653-6620 or bruce.riddle@dartmouth.edu.

Angeline Andrew, PhD can answer questions on the new laboratory-based prognostic biomarker surveillance/data collection. 603-653-9019 or

angeline.andrew@dartmouth.edu.

This project is funded as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Comparative Effectiveness Research activities through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. NHSCR is supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Program of Cancer Registries (NPCR) through cooperative agreement U58/DP000798 awarded to the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health Services, Bureau of Disease Control and Health Statistics, Health Statistics and Data Management Section. The contents contained herein are solely the responsibility of NHSCR and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Strict policies and procedures have been developed to maintain confidentiality in disclosure of data.

Call for Research Proposals

The Northern New England Clinical Oncology Society is seeking research funding proposals for investigative projects of value to the entire Northern New England community of cancer care providers. The society seeks to award one or more research grants to worthy proposals, up to a total of \$10,000. Eligible candidates will be a current NNECOS member in good standing. Projects should be in alignment with the society's mission to assure access to high quality oncology care in our region. Preference will be given to projects promoting collaboration amongst NNECOS institutions (academic and



community). Project topics might include improving supportive care, enhancing access to research trials, and increasing access to cancer care in the region. Awardees will be notified on or around December 15, 2011. Awardees will be required to submit progress reports to NNECOS and to present a final report of the research at the NNECOS annual meeting.

Funding applications are available at www.nnecos.org/research. **Submission Deadline:** Thursday, September 15, 2011 at 5pm



Check us out on the web at www.nnecos.org!

Members can access their existing account through a simple login process.

- click "forgot password"
- enter your email address in the box when prompted
- follow the email instructions to "reset" your password

UPDATES FROM ASCO

ASCO Issues Status Report on Progress of Cooperative Group Restructuring

A new [ASCO report](#) analyzes progress in restructuring of the National Cancer Institute's Clinical Trials Cooperative Group Program and implementation of the recommendations of a 2010 Institute of Medicine report, [A National Cancer Clinical Trials System for the 21st Century](#).

"ASCO is a strong proponent of preserving and enhancing our federally funded clinical trials system," said ASCO President Dr. Michael Link. "The IOM Committee developed evidence-based support for the value of our system and the essential role it plays in the prevention and cure of cancer."

FDA Establishes New Sunscreen Guidelines

The FDA has issued new [guidelines](#) for sunscreen labels in an effort to reduce consumer confusion. Under the new regulations, products may be labeled "broad spectrum" if they block both UVA and UVB radiation as both cause skin cancer. ASCO's patient information website, [Cancer.Net](#) also has comprehensive information on protecting skin from sun damage.

Drug Shortages Legislation Introduced in the House

Representatives Tom Rooney (R-FL) and Diana DeGette (D-CO) introduced H.R. 2245, legislation that would amend the federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to provide the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) with improved capacity to prevent drug shortages. As an important first step in addressing the complex issue of drug shortages, this bill is consistent with recommendations from the November 2010 Drug Shortages Summit co-convened by ASCO. The proposed legislation includes provisions that would expand FDA authority to require manufacturer notification of shortages and market withdrawals, and enhance communication among health care providers and stakeholders in the pharmaceutical supply chain about the nature and expected duration of shortages. ASCO and

the Summit co-conveners provided input on this legislation and have sent letters to the sponsors thanking them for taking action on this issue and supporting this legislation.

Advocacy Tips for State Affiliates

The House and Senate are scheduled to spend the month on August in their home districts/states. This provides a good opportunity to meet with your legislators in your local area in either a face to face [meeting](#) or a [site visit](#) and discuss the key issues affecting your members. Your Members of Congress' schedules fill up quickly, so now is the time to start scheduling these meetings. Send in a request for a meeting or site visit today, and encourage your Society members to do so also. ASCO has provided basic guides, but can provide contact information and help schedule and prepare for these meetings as well. Contact Tara Leystra at tara.leystra@asco.org or 571-483-1646 for more information.

Guidance on Purchasing Drugs in Short Supply

If your practice is experiencing a shortage of a particular therapy, the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) has prepared a [document](#) offering guidance on purchasing drugs in short supply. The document contains excerpts from ASHP's [Guidelines on Managing Drug Shortages](#).

National Lung Cancer Partnership's Young Investigator Research Grant Application Period Now Open

The National Lung Cancer Partnership announces their 7th annual research grant competition. This year, multiple 2-year \$100,000 awards are available to clinical and basic science fellows and junior faculty to advance their research in lung cancer etiology, prevention, early detection, treatment, and symptom management.

The purpose of these awards is to drive forward research that will increase understanding



of lung cancer risk, biology, and response to treatment, in an effort to fulfill the Partnership's mission of decreasing deaths due to the disease and helping patients live longer and better lives.

At the time of application, an applicant must hold a doctoral degree (MD, PhD, DO, DrPH, or equivalent), and be a post-doctoral fellow or within the first 5 years of a faculty appointment at a not-for-profit institution in the United States or Canada. Applicants will be judged on the merits of their research proposal, career development plan, commitment to pursuing a career in lung cancer research, and research environment.

For complete application eligibility and instructions for the awards, please visit the National Lung Cancer Partnership's website at www.NationalLungCancerPartnership.org. The application deadline is September 9, 2011. Awards will be announced on or before December 31, 2011.

ASCO Issues Updated Guideline on the Role of Bone-Modifying Agents in the Prevention and Treatment of Bone Metastases in Patients With Metastatic Breast Cancer

ASCO has issued an update to its [clinical practice guideline](#) on the use of bone-modifying agents, in particular, osteoclast inhibitors, to prevent and treat skeletal complications from bone metastases in patients with metastatic breast cancer. The new guideline includes recommendations on the use of a new drug, denosumab (Xgeva), monitoring patients treated with bone-modifying agents, and priorities for future research, in addition to addressing an uncommon condition associated with their use.

Highlight Your Members' Artistic Talents

ASCO is seeking submissions for its 2012 Expressions of Hope wall calendar. If you or someone you know has been affected by cancer - as a doctor, patient, survivor, friend, family member, or caregiver - please encourage them to submit their work and share hope with others through art. [Submissions](#) will be accepted through August 31.

Cancer Community Center **Supporting Cancer Patients in Maine**

The Cancer Community Center provides FREE support, information and activities for any adult impacted by cancer including patients, caregivers, family and friends of those with cancer, and those who have lost someone to cancer. Since its inception in 1998, the Cancer Community Center has helped 3,700 people coping with the effects of cancer.



The Center's programs are designed to build social and emotional support as a complement to one's regular medical care. Yoga, Pilates, Reiki, Tai Chi, Strength Training, Meditative Hypnosis, Zumba, Knitting, Scrapbooking, Cards & Games, Nutrition Education, Cooking Demonstrations, and 14 different cancer support groups are just a handful of the weekly activities offered at the Center. In addition to these offerings at our facility (778 Main Street in South Portland, ME), the Cen-

ter also coordinates the Maine Buddy Program™, which receives daily calls from cancer patients, caregivers, and bereaved individuals who are seeking support from a trained volunteer who has experienced a similar cancer journey. The Cancer Community Center has been matching people in one-to-one mentoring relationships across the state of Maine for ten years and has received over 1,000 buddy requests to date.

Drop-ins are welcome; no referral requirements and no income verification required. All activities, classes and support services are provided at no charge thanks to the generosity of corporate and individual donations, private foundations and community fundraisers.

To learn more, visit our website at www.CancerCommunityCenter.org or call us at (207)774-2200.

Highlights from ASCO's Latest Oncology Practice Insider



Cancer Center Business Summit Call for Abstracts: Submit by July 31

The 2011 Cancer Center Business Summit (CCBS) is soliciting abstracts that outline projects or processes impacting work and the delivery of care. CCBS is a conference that focuses on oncologist/hospital relationships, business models, and market strategies in cancer care. The Summit brings together key cancer care stakeholders with business, finance, and legal thought leaders to explore the future course for oncology. In addition, the American Society of Clinical Oncology® (ASCO®) is an official participant in the 2011 Cancer Center Business Summit. Abstracts must be submitted to *Journal of Oncology Practice* (JOP) by July 31. For details visit [JOP](#).

Proposed Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Released

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services released its proposed Physician Fee Schedule and Revisions to Payment Policies for 2012 on July 1. The rule which is titled "Medicare Program; Payment Policies Under the Physician Fee Schedule and Other Revisions to Part B for CY 2012" will publish on July 19, 2011. The comment period will close August 30, 2011. The rule can be viewed at http://www.ofr.gov/OFRUpload/OFRData/2011-16972_PI.pdf.

National Provider Call PQRS & E-Prescribing Incentive Program

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services will host a national provider call on the PQRS & E-Prescribing incentive programs on Tuesday, July 26, 2011 from 1:30 PM - 3:00 PM ET. The call will provide an overview of the proposed fee schedule as it relates to the 2012 incentive programs. Register at <http://www.eventsvc.com/palmettogba/072611> by July 25th at 1:30 PM ET.

E-Prescribing and PQRS Educational Resources Available

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has made available several educational resources for the E-Prescribing and PQRS incentive programs. On the [E-Prescribing webpage](#) you can find a [fact sheet detailing how to participate](#) and a [quick reference chart](#) on the program. The [PQRS webpage](#) provides resources on the [claims/registry based reporting process](#), the process for [reporting using a Preventive Care Measures Group](#) and

[reporting periods for 2011 fact sheet](#). To access all these resources on either site click on the educational resources tab and scroll down to the *downloads* section.

Open Door Forum

The next Physician, Nurses and Allied Health Professionals Open Door Forum is scheduled for Tuesday, August 9, 2011 from 2pm-3pm ET. If you wish to participate:

Dial- 1-800-837-1935

Conference ID- 68641515

Talking About Cost with Your Patients

Because the cost of cancer care can be high, it is important for patients to understand what to expect before starting treatment so that they can manage the financial effect of cancer. [Managing the Cost of Cancer Care](#) is designed to help patients talk with the health care team about these issues. It outlines what costs to expect, types of insurance, how insurance rules have changed under the 2010 health reform law, financial resources, tips to organize financial paperwork, and more. [Download a PDF](#) or order free printed copies in English and Spanish through the [ASCO University bookstore](#).

Participate in the fall QOPI Data Collection Round

Find out what 1,000 registered practices already know, and participate in the QOPI data collection this fall. QOPI is a quality measurement and improvement program, developed by practicing oncologists and world-renowned quality improvement experts. Practices new to QOPI should register by mid August.

Visit gopi.asco.org for more information, or to register.

Medicare Learning Network® Updated Articles and Fact Sheets

The Medicare Learning Network has updated several articles and fact sheets on billing, [Medicare program enrollment](#) and [Glaucoma screenings](#). Visit the [MLN Products](#) section on CMS.gov to access more information.

If you would like to subscribe to Oncology Practice Insider, please send an email to practice@asco.org. Also, please feel free to forward this communication to your colleagues.

“News from our Supporters” will be included in NNECOS News on a space available basis, with preference being given to supporters who have not shared news in the previous two issues. Send your submissions to info@nnecos.org.

ONCOLOGY SUPPLY

New Patient Assistance Resource Available

Available in June 2011, check out the new Patient Assistance Resource on the Oncology Supply website, www.oncologysupply.com. It's helpful information for those who need all the help they can get!

CENTOCOR ORTHOBIOTECH

FDA Approves ZYTIGA™ (abiraterone acetate) for late-stage prostate cancer

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved Zytiga (abiraterone acetate) in combination with prednisone (a steroid) to treat patients with late-stage (metastatic) castration-resistant prostate cancer who have received prior docetaxel (chemotherapy). [One-to-one support](#) is available for people being treated with ZYTIGA. www.centocoraccessone.com

DENDREON

PROVENGE National Coverage Decision and Q-code Update

- The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a final National Coverage Decision (NCD) for PROVENGE on June 30, 2011, requiring Medicare contractors to cover the use of PROVENGE for treatment of asymptomatic or minimally symptomatic metastatic castrate resistant (hormone refractory) prostate cancer.
- PROVENGE was issued a product specific Q-code, Q2043, effective July 1, 2011, which allows for electronic submission of claims and is expected to accelerate time to payment for physicians. The new code, Q2043, is for Sipuleucel-T, minimum of 50 million autologous CD54+ cells activated with PAP-GM-CSF, including leukapheresis and all other preparatory procedures, per infusion. The NDC for PROVENGE remains the same: 30237-8900-06. Medicare will recognize Q2043 in the hospital outpatient and physician office settings. Although coding requirements of other payers may vary, we expect some non-Medicare payers to recognize Q2043 in these settings as well.
- Q2043 may replace other codes currently used to bill PROVENGE, including:
 - C9273 (Sipuleucel-T, minimum of 50 million autologous CD54+ cells activated with PAP-GM-CSF, including leukapheresis and all other preparatory procedures, per infusion)
 - J3490 (Unclassified drugs)
 - J3590 (Unclassified biologics)
 - J9999 (Not otherwise classified, antineoplastic drugs)

AMGEN

XGEVA FIRST STEP™ Coupon Program

Amgen announces [XGEVA FIRST STEP™ Coupon Program](#) to assist commercially insured patients with their out-of-pocket costs, including co-pays, co-insurances and deductibles:

- No income eligibility requirements
- \$0 out-of-pocket cost for initial dose
- \$25 maximum out-of-pocket cost for subsequent injections

CELGENE

FDA Approves Celgene's ISTODAX (romidepsin) for the treatment of peripheral T-cell lymphoma (PTCL) in patients who have received at least 1 prior therapy

ISTODAX (romidepsin) for injection has been approved for the treatment of peripheral T-cell lymphoma (PTCL) in patients who have received at least 1 prior therapy. ISTODAX is also approved for the treatment of cutaneous T-cell lymphoma (CTCL) in patients who have received at least 1 prior systemic therapy. For more information about patient assistance for ISTODAX, visit <http://www.celgenepatientsupport.com>.