

NewsLine



Missouri Cancer Coalition

www.mocancercoalition.org

October 6, 2009



President's Message

I want to invite all of you to the upcoming Annual Educational Conference of the Missouri Cancer Coalition to be held in Columbia on November 6. The overall Conference theme is “**Adapting to Changes and Challenges in Oncology: A Conference for the Entire Cancer Team.**” As usual, we have a terrific program planned with a breadth of topics ranging from electronic health records to healthcare reform to comparative effectiveness. You can register for the conference on the MCC website, www.mocancercoalition.org.

This year marks a potential watershed in healthcare reform, as you know. All oncology practices, whether privately-run, nationally-managed, or hospital-based, are feeling the increased pressures and challenges of providing cancer care services in today's healthcare environment. I always have great faith that we will continue to find ways to care for our patients, but this continues to be a challenge.

I am asked at times about the value of organizations in medicine. I can assure you that all others in the game, whether insurers or state and federal governments looking for ways to save money, would be happy to have physicians and practices disorganized. Only by holding together can we protect our patients.

As the official state affiliate of ASCO and state chapter of ACCC, MCC strives to be a resource for all oncology practices in Missouri, as well as for cancer survivor organizations and those interested in the care of the cancer patient. ASCO and ACCC depend on state societies to provide the resources for problems affecting us locally. Should you encounter difficulties helping your patients, negotiating the intricacies of Medicare or private payers, or strengthening relationships between oncology departments and hospitals, MCC, along with ASCO and ACCC, has resources to help.

The MCC Board of Directors and I look forward to seeing all members of Missouri cancer care teams at the Hilton Garden Inn in Columbia. Thank you again for your support of MCC.

Sincerely yours,
Joseph J. Muscato, M.D., FACP



Interaction with Industry: Different Focus, Increased Value

Although the healthcare landscape is in the midst of change, corporate alliances between the oncology state societies, pharmaceutical companies, and other support organizations continue to be valuable and mutually beneficial for everyone. The new PhRMA guidelines and current economic conditions have all contributed to investigating new areas of support, reevaluating approaches to funders, and using different techniques to navigate grant preparation and submission, where the process seems to be evolving.

MCC continues to revise the way of rethinking about its programs and collaboration with industry partners. We are now renaming the exhibit hall and calling it the Resource Center with the aim that it will become more about education and information and less about the “selling” of products.

As a medical association, we need to remind everyone that the interaction with manufacturers provides insight, education about their current products, their pipeline, and their patient assistance programs. Our supporters, in turn, have the opportunity to tell their story and hopefully help us solve quandaries and provide the best possible cancer options for patients. See you in the Resource Center!

Linda Jackier Schugar
Manager, Corporate Relations
lschugar@acc-cancer.org

Drugs in the News from the MCC Corporate Members

Genentech Inc. announced that the U.S. FDA has approved **Avastin® (bevacizumab)** plus interferon-alfa for people with metastatic renal cell carcinoma. The approval is based on data from a global, randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled Phase III study (AVOREN) of 649 patients with previously untreated metastatic renal cell carcinoma. The study showed patients who received Avastin plus interferon-alfa had a 67 percent increase in progression-free survival (PFS) compared with patients receiving interferon-alfa plus placebo. For more information, go to: <http://www.gene.com/genel/news/press-releases/display.do?method=detail&id=12307>.

Novartis (East Hanover, N.J.) announced

that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved **Afinitor® (everolimus) tablets** for patients with advanced renal cell carcinoma (RCC) after failure of treatment with Sutent® (sunitinib) or Nexavar® (sorafenib). The drug is intended for those patients with advanced RCC who have already tried another kinase inhibitor, Sutent or Nexavar. For more information, go to: <http://www.afinitor.com/index.jsp?site=PC013498&source=01030&irmasrc=ONCWB0046>. (*Oncology Issues*, May/June 2009)

Eli Lilly and Company (Indianapolis, Ind.) announced that the company received a fourth approval from the U.S. FDA for **Alimta® (pemetrexed for injection)**. The latest approval is for Alimta as a maintenance therapy for locally advanced or metastatic non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC), specifically for patients with a nonsquamous histology whose disease has not progressed after four cycles of platinum-based first-line chemotherapy. Alimta is not indicated for treatment of patients with squamous cell NSCLC. For more information, go to: <http://www.alimta.com/pat/index.jsp>.

New label information on the cancer treatment **Erbix® (cetuximab)** will state there is no evidence the drug works on a minority of colon cancer patients with a specific genetic mutation. Eli Lilly and Company and Bristol-Myers Squibb Company announced that the addition to the drug's label will state that studies have not shown that Erbitux helps patients whose tumors have a mutated gene, or biomarker, called *KRAS*. Amgen Inc. announced a similar label change for its cancer drug **Vectibix® (panitumumab)**. For more information, go to: http://www.accc-cancer.org/mediaroom/media_newsfeed.asp#labelchange.

Upcoming MCC Events— Mark the Date

ANNUAL MCC MEMBERSHIP
CONFERENCE:
Friday, November 6, 2009;
Hilton Garden Inn, Columbia, MO

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Thanks for the value you add to MCC!

For more information about
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or call: 301-984-9496, ext. 218