

# FINANCIAL ADVOCACY NETWORK

www.accc-cancer.org/financialadvocacy

The Association of Community Cancer Centers (ACCC) received support from Lilly Oncology to survey its membership about key trends and nationwide developments in the business of cancer care. Here are highlights from ACCC's 2014 Trends in Cancer Programs survey specific to financial advocacy. For additional information about the survey, go to www.accc-cancer.org.

### Are We Meeting the Needs of Our Cancer Patients?

Despite recent studies showing that patients *want* to know how much their cancer treatment will cost them and that many are concerned about the cost of their treatment, respondents say that only 43% of physicians take cost into account during the treatment planning process; 39% report that physicians do NOT take cost into account when planning the treatment regimen.

### Do Your Physicians Take Cost into Account When Planning Treatment Regimens?



Only 39% of programs estimate total treatment costs and the patient's responsibility prior to the start of treatment—53% report that they do NOT calculate treatment costs before starting treatment.

#### **Other Key Survey Findings**

- While patients may want to know treatment costs, survey data suggests they are hesitant to ask. Only 5% of cancer programs report that their patients "almost always" ask about costs prior to starting treatment.
- At some point during treatment 97% of cancer programs do "verbally communicate" patients' financial responsibility; 65% also provide this information in written form.
- But does this information really affect patient decision-making? Only 11% of cancer programs report that patients "frequently" ask for more affordable treatment options, compared to 19% of cancer programs that say patients "almost never" ask for more affordable options.
- While survey results on uninsured patients are mixed—42% of cancer programs report seeing more uninsured patients; 38% percent report no change in the last 12 months—underinsured patients are on the rise. More than half of respondents (54%) report seeing more underinsured patients in the last 12 months.

## How Often Do Your Patients Ask About the Cost of Treatment Prior to Starting on a Treatment Regimen?



What Percentage of Your Patients Are Unable to Pay for Treatment?



### Financial Advocacy—A Growing Field



84% of programs employ "financial specialists" on staff.



of programs use third-party commercial financial assistance specialists that charge for services.

#### Which Staff Member Performs Financial Advocacy Services?

84% Financial specialist

26% Reimbursement specialist

**10%** Oncology nurse navigator

6% Oncology social worker

10% Other (front office staff, pharmacy staff, patient advocates)

#### Where Do Patients Receive **Financial Advocacy Support?**

4% Pharmaceutical patient assistance programs

Advocacy organizations, such as /O the Patient Advocate Foundation

Non-profit organizations, such as NeedyMeds

### Financial Advocacy Services, Percentage of Programs That... 86% Research prior authorization needs 85% Help patients access pharmaceutical patient assistance programs 83% Assess patient eligibility for federal or state assistance 82% Help patients access co-pay assistance programs 80% Verify insurance benefits 77% Research community resources 71% Answer insurance and billing questions **71%** Help patients access foundation assistance

70% Verify patient out-of-pockets costs

65% Identify financial barriers to treatment

62% Develop payment plans with patients

55% Assist with medical necessity reviews

55% Assist with claims and denials

#### **Generosity at Work**

of respondents say that their program has a foundation or philanthropic organization to "help meet their patients' financial needs" by paying for...

40% Food

22% Childcare

74% Transportation

54% Co-pay amounts

**50%** Household bills

46% Insurance deductibles

**10%** Other (lodging, housing, screenings, etc.)

Association of Community Cancer Centers

ACCC's Financial Advocacy Network project is supported by

