

The Future is Bright

BY RANDALL A. OYER, MD



I'd like to start my last column by thanking ACCC, its board of trustees, and all of you for allowing me to serve as president of this collaborative, forward-thinking association. Assuming the

ACCC presidency in March of 2020, just as the COVID-19 public health emergency went into effect, was certainly a dramatic way to enter office. That said, I am pleased with how much we have accomplished these last 12 months—despite the nationwide shutdown and ongoing pandemic.

As I end my tenure as ACCC president, I want to thank everyone for their dedication to the President's Theme "Community Oncology Can Close the Gap in Cancer Research." Those of us who work in oncology have long understood that clinical trials are the gold standard of treatment for patients with cancer. This year the entire world had first-row seats to the life-saving nature of clinical trials through the herculean efforts to develop and bring to market several COVID-19 vaccines.


These scientific and medical breakthroughs do not happen in a vacuum. They occur when key stakeholders come to the table with their combined expertise, knowledge, and resources to collaborate on a common goal. This happened for ACCC this year with its collaboration with ASCO (American Society of Clinical Oncology) to foster racial and ethnic minority participation in cancer treatment trials to better reflect the diversity of people at risk for or living with cancer. Stay tuned: Much more will be coming from this in 2021.

Until then, I ask you to join your fellow ACCC member programs and practices already participating in the ASCO Registry on COVID-19 and Cancer to gather evidence on the effect of COVID-19 on patients with cancer. Thanks to support from Conquer Cancer, the ASCO foundation, ASCO provides payments (both for start-up and for each patient entered) to help cover expenses

involved in participating. As of February 1, there were 1,771 patients in the registry. The greater diversity and number of patients the registry represents, the more we can learn from this unique experience in cancer care. Register today at asco.org/asco-coronavirus-information/coronavirus-registry.

Based on the baseline and longitudinal data on patients with cancer and COVID-19 collected by the registry, ASCO plans to deliver periodic reports with key findings that will influence future care delivery. You can read an executive summary of the first of these reports, "Road to Recovery Report: Learning from the COVID-19 Experience to Improve Clinical Research and Cancer Care," online at <http://bit.ly/ASCO-R2R>. The report contains post-pandemic recommendations in key areas, such as these four telemedicine recommendations:

1. **Ensure robust reimbursement and coverage** of telemedicine at the state and national levels.
2. **Develop new products to inform** guidelines, standards, and models that improve the quality of care.
3. **Create training for providers** on delivering high-quality cancer care via telemedicine.
4. **Develop new measures to assess the quality** of telemedicine and adapt existing ones to reflect the virtual delivery of care.

Though the last 12 months brought unprecedented change to oncology, healthcare, our country, and the world at large, it also brought us together to improve the future for our patients and their families. And the future is bright. *We can and will* improve our response to emergent diseases, like COVID-19. *We can and will* improve patient access to clinical trials. *We can and will* improve health equity overall. Personally, I can think of no one more capable or more prepared to lead us in these efforts than 2021-2022 ACCC President Krista Nelson, MSW, LCSW, OSW-C, BCD. As program manager of Quality and Research, Cancer Support Services and Compassion at Providence Cancer Institute, Krista can help us all improve our empathy, mindfulness, active listening, and many other skills that are necessary to make the improvements I just highlighted. Please join me in welcoming Krista. I know you will give her all the support, resources, and tools she will need to succeed. 

Coming in Your 2021 ONCOLOGY ISSUES

- ▶ Transportation: A Holistic Approach to a Systemic Problem
- ▶ The Center for Indigenous Cancer Research at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center
- ▶ Utilizing Technology to Identify Patient Co-morbidities and Reduce Hospital and ED Admissions
- ▶ Onboarding Experienced Non-oncology Nurses to Address Staffing Shortages: Miami Cancer Institute's Oncology Training Academy
- ▶ Improve Oral Oncolytic Workflow and Reduce Treatment Delays with a Pharmacist Collaborative Practice Agreement
- ▶ Reducing Readmissions After Chemotherapy with Predictive Modeling of Risk Factors
- ▶ Integration of Prehab, Rehab, and Prospective Surveillance into Interdisciplinary Teams
- ▶ A Nurse Navigator-Led Community-Based Cardio-oncology Clinic
- ▶ Shifting Chemo Administration from Inpatient to Outpatient Setting Improves Care and Reduces Costs
- ▶ Integrating Spiritual Care in the Outpatient Oncology Setting
- ▶ Use of Pharmacy Informatics to Standardize Pharmacist Review of Oral Oncolytic Medications for Hospitalized Patients
- ▶ Medication Transitions in Hematologic Malignancy Patients at a Safety Net Hospital
- ▶ Tailoring Distress Screening in Oncology Populations: Timing Distress Screening in Surgically Resectable Esophageal Cancer