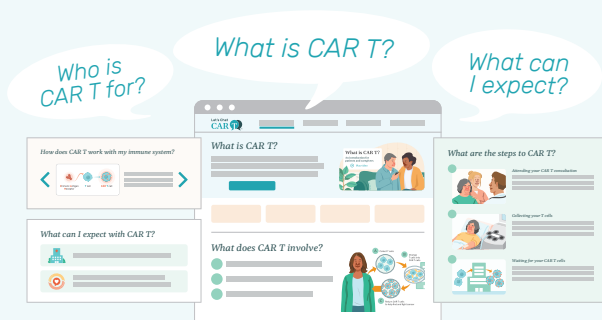


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FROM THE EDITOR

Cultivating Strong Teams in Oncology Care

BY MARK LIU, MHA



In the dynamic environment of oncology care, the strength of our teams is paramount. As clinicians, researchers, administrators, and advocates, our ability to collaborate effectively directly impacts the quality of care we

provide to patients and the advancement of cancer treatment as a field. I particularly enjoyed Dr. Katherine Meese's recent presentation at the ACCC 50th Annual Meeting & Cancer Center Business Summit (#AMCCBS), which offered invaluable insights into leading healthy teams.

A crucial aspect highlighted was the establishment of standards of behavior. Clear expectations regarding respect, communication, and accountability lay the foundation for a culture of mutual respect and trust. Understanding and appreciating the differences among team members further enriches collaboration, fostering an environment where diverse perspectives are not just tolerated but celebrated. Central to cohesive teamwork is the alignment of individuals with the organization's mission, vision, and shared goals. When everyone is working towards a common purpose, synergy flourishes, driving innovation and progress. However, this unity should not come at the expense of tolerating subpar performance. Dr. Meese cautioned against allowing workarounds for low performers, as it undermines team morale and effectiveness.

Encouraging collaborations across departments and disciplines not only creates efficiencies in problem-solving but also fosters a sense of interconnectedness and collective achievement. Equally important is ensuring that every voice within the team has the opportunity to be heard. Actively soliciting and incorporating diverse perspectives not only leads to better decision-making but also cultivates an inclusive culture where every member feels valued and empowered.

Lastly, Dr. Meese reminded me of the importance of having fun in the workplace. While the nature of our work in oncology is

serious and demanding, finding moments of levity and camaraderie can strengthen bonds and alleviate stress. Importantly, these opportunities do not always have to happen outside of work; simple gestures like celebrating achievements or organizing team-building activities during work hours can have a profound impact on team morale.

It is clear that building and maintaining healthy teams in oncology care requires deliberate effort and commitment from all stakeholders. By prioritizing people, embracing diversity, aligning with shared goals, fostering collaborations, and infusing joy into our work, we not only enhance the well-being of our teams but also elevate the quality of care we provide to our patients.

Dr. Meese's presentation was a special collaboration between ACCC and the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE). Given the considerable overlap in membership between both organizations, I would love to hear your thoughts on this collaboration and any ideas for future opportunities. I certainly welcomed the opportunity to earn CE credits!

Here's to cultivating resilient, compassionate, and effective teams that continue to drive progress in the fight against cancer. To read highlights from #AMCCBS, turn to "Action" (page 75) in this issue. And for more valuable in-person learning opportunities and to hear presentations from the 2024 ACCC Innovator Winners, be sure to join me October 9-11 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. 📍