



NNECOS News

an email publication of Northern New England Clinical Oncology Society

April 2009
Volume 5 Issue 1

6TH ANNUAL SPRING PRACTICE MANAGEMENT SEMINAR TUESDAY MAY 19TH

Join oncology professionals from across the region for NNECOS's 6th annual practice management seminar at the Grappone Center in Concord, NH on Tuesday May 19th.

Continental breakfast will be served at 8:45am, along with time to visit with exhibitors. The opening session begins at 9:30am, with a presentation from NHIC Medical Director Dr. Craig Haug on the MAC J14 transition.

Following the mid-morning refreshment break, attendees will select from three different breakout



session tracks: Medical Oncology Billing with Teri U. Guidi, MBA, FAAMA, Radiation Oncology Billing with Ron DiGiaino, MBA, BSHA, and new this year, a specific Nursing Issues track with Shirley Shuster, APRN, BC, OCN. Each two-part breakout session will begin at 11:00am, break for lunch from 12:30-1:30pm, and conclude at 2:30pm.

Registration materials are being mailed this week, and are due back no later than May 5th. See you in Concord!

The Practice Management Experts You Want to Hear!

MAC Update

J14 Transition

Craig Haug, MD,
NHIC Medical
Director

Radiation Oncology



Ron DiGiaino, MBA,
BSHA, President and
CEO of Revenue Cycle,
Inc.

Medical Oncology



Teri U. Guidi, MBA,
FAAMA, President
& CEO, Oncology
Management
Consulting Group

Nursing Issues



Shirley Shuster, APRN, BC,
OCN, Director of Clinical
Services and Nursing for
Commonwealth
Hematology Oncology

Watch the mail for registration materials and register by May 5th!

NEW! MEMBERS' FORUM

NNECOS is pleased to announce a new online resource for our members. The Members' Forum is your online repository of news, initiatives and activities impacting our region. The information is divided into four sections, PUBLIC COMMENT REQUESTED, UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES, RESOURCES, and ANNOUNCEMENTS.



Information will be added as it is received, so check back regularly! Simply navigate to www.nnecos.org and click on Members' Forum. Members will also be sent periodic emails highlighting pertinent information added.

NHIC, CORP. AND NATIONAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES PRESENTS THE SPRING 2009 MEDICARE FAIR

National Government Services will be presenting the following sessions:

Fundamentals of Home Health and Hospice

Will these benefits affect you as a provider? Many of these services may have a direct impact on your facility. This session will introduce you to what services are available in each of the Medicare home health and hospice benefits.

Medicare Part A Verifying Beneficiary Eligibility

Did you know that checking beneficiary eligibility prior to submitting the claim can reduce unnecessary rejections and return to provider claims and increase reimbursement for your facility?

Before submitting claims, it is critical that you check the beneficiary's Medicare eligibility. Checking eligibility information allows you to identify if the beneficiary is entitled to

- * Medicare Part A, Part B, or both Part A and Part B;
- * enrolled in an health maintenance organization;
- * enrolled with another insurance that is primary over Medicare;
- * in an open 60-day home health prospective payment system episode; or
- * in an open hospice election period.

Registration for this conference is now open!
(http://www.medicarenhic.com/ne_prov/edprograms.shtml)

Previous fairs have sold out early—don't be disappointed! There is a limited capacity and it is on a first-come-first-served basis. For more information and to register click [here](#).

For Medicare Fair questions call (781) 741-3190.

DETAILS

May 13, 2009

Norwood, Massachusetts

9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Four Point Sheraton

Route 1

1125 Boston Providence TPKE

(413) 781-1010

June 10, 2009

Manchester, New Hampshire

9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Radisson Hotel

700 Elm Street

(603) 625-1000

COST

\$100 per attendee



ASH WEBINAR "PQRI AND E-PRESCRIBING: NUTS AND BOLTS"
TUESDAY, APRIL 28TH, 2009 FROM 5:00 P.M. – 6:15 P.M

This webinar will focus on the basics of how to report the 2009 hematology-related Physician Quality Reporting Initiative measures and how to complete the E-Prescribing measure. It will help ensure that practitioners follow the correct steps and receive the bonus for successful reporting.

Sylvia Publ, CMS Senior Quality Advisor, will discuss the basics of how to satisfactorily report the 2009 PQRI quality measures and to participate in the

E-Prescribing program. Afterwards, there will be an opportunity to ask questions. The webinar focuses on assisting hematologists as well as their office staff who may benefit from a greater understanding of the PQRI and E-Prescribing process. Contact Matt Eckel at grassroots@hematology.org to sign up for this webinar and to get answers to any further questions you may have.

ACUTE MYELOGENOUS LEUKEMIA (AML)
EMERGING TREATMENT APPROACHES
Free Telephone Education Program

DATE: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2009
TIME: 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM EASTERN

SPEAKER:

Judith E. Karp, MD
Professor of Oncology and Medicine
Director, Leukemia Program
Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive
Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins
Baltimore, MD

PARTICIPATE AND LEARN

more about:

- AML, including signs, symptoms and medical terms
- Diagnostic tests for AML

- Current and emerging treatment options for AML
- Possible treatment side effects and the importance of planning for follow-up care
- Clinical trials and their role in the advancement of AML treatment

Participate in the discussion by asking Dr. Karp questions during the Q&A session.

To register by phone, please call (866) 992-9950, ext. 305. To register online, visit <http://www.rmei.com/LLSaml/index2.php>.



ASCO ANNOUNCES NEW E-DIGEST FOR PRACTICE MANAGEMENT
edited by NNECOS Board Member Elaine Towle, CMPE

Check out ASCO's new e-Digest, Oncology Practice Insider, an interactive bi-weekly communication specifically devoted to oncology practice management issues and for practice management professionals. In the INSIDER, you will find information you can use such as valuable ICD-10 information, ASP and CMS

updates, as well as a standing coding and billing Q&A. Be sure to check out "What do you think...?" and submit your responses on the timely questions that are posed in each issue. Please feel free to share the INSIDER with your colleagues and encourage them to sign up by sending an email to practice@asco.org.

UNITEDHEALTHCARE UPDATES FROM DR. LEE NEWCOMER

Lee N. Newcomer, MD, of UnitedHealthcare Oncology recently announced information about KRAS gene requirements for colorectal cancer, and access to the NCCN Compendium for physicians treating UnitedHealthcare patients. The official announcement follows.

KRAS gene requirement for cetuximab and panitumumab in colorectal cancer

Effective April 1, 2009, UnitedHealthcare will require the submission of a pathology report documenting a wild type KRAS gene for coverage of Erbitux® (cetuximab J9055) and Vectibix® (panitumumab J9303) in the treatment of metastatic colorectal cancer. As always, final coverage is subject to the member's benefit plan document.

UnitedHealthcare has contracts with two national laboratories (Genzyme Genetics and LabCorp) that provide KRAS testing. Specimens may be sent directly to these laboratories; claims for members that are paid on a fee for service basis (non capitated) will be paid directly to the laboratories by UnitedHealthcare. Both laboratories request that a copy of the pathology report be sent with the specimen. If your local participating laboratory provides this test it will also be covered.

Requirements:

- The submission of a KRAS pathology report is required for members starting therapy using cetuximab or panitumumab after the implementation date. Only one pathology report per member ID is required.
- Physicians will not be required to submit pathology reports for individuals that were on cetuximab or panitumumab prior to the effective date for the plan's policy.
- The policy applies to those individuals where UnitedHealthcare or one of its affiliated entities is the primary payor.
- Pathology reports are NOT required if UnitedHealthcare or one of its affiliated entities is the secondary payor.

For UnitedHealthcare patients: Fax a copy of the pathology report to (915) 231-1970 using the KRAS fax coversheet. The coversheet is available at

UnitedHealthcareOnline.com >Cancer - Oncology > KRAS > KRAS Fax Coversheet. You may use this process and submit your claims electronically.

For Oxford patients: Oxford will also require the KRAS pathology report for individuals starting cetuximab and panitumumab therapy 4/1/09. Providers are required to obtain prior authorization for the use of cetuximab and panitumumab for patients with colorectal cancer. Prior authorization requirements include the submission of the laboratory report demonstrating the presence of the KRAS wild type gene. Providers should follow the standard prior authorization process.

Additional information regarding the implementation of this policy for UnitedHealthcare and its entities is available at UnitedHealthcareOnline.com and on the other health plan websites.

Lee Newcomer comments: UnitedHealthcare had a similar process for the HER2 gene and trastuzumab coverage. During the two years the edit was active we noted that the billing offices frequently sent the wrong clinical records. We only need the copy of the laboratory report documenting the KRAS gene type. Please do not send pathology reports, clinic notes, discharge summaries or other unrelated materials. It may be beneficial for the clinicians to teach the billing staff what document to send for this review.

Access to the NCCN Compendium for UnitedHealthcare coverage

The National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) has announced that effective April 1, 2009 they will require a paid subscription for access to the NCCN Drugs and Biologics Compendium. As you already know, UnitedHealthcare uses this document as a reference for coverage decisions.

UHC recognizes the value of the NCCN Drugs and Biologics Compendium in physician practices and has purchased a group rate. We are pleased to offer FREE access to the NCCN compendium to our UHC participating physicians and their office staff.

To access the NCCN Drugs and Biologics

Compendium under the UHC agreement, you will need to be a registered user of UnitedHealthcareonline. Once you are logged into our website, proceed to the NCCN Compendium page. From there, you can log in to www.NCCN.org for free access to the NCCN Drugs and Biologics Compendium.

If you are not a registered user of UnitedHealthcareonline, go to the New User link in the upper right corner of the home page and register.

Please share this update with others in your office that accesses the NCCN Compendium.

Lee N. Newcomer, M.D.
UnitedHealthcare Oncology
5901 Lincoln Drive, MN012-S210, Edina, MN 55436
Phone: 952 992 4025
lee_newcomer@uhc.com



NCI Promotional Tools Increase Awareness of Clinical Trials

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) announces the availability of two new patient education posters and a pin to increase awareness about clinical trials. Their purpose is to begin the discussion with cancer patients that a trial may be a reasonable option in the continuum of their cancer care.

These new posters and pins will introduce patients to the concept of a clinical trial, complement education and recruitment efforts, and serve as conversation starters to discuss trials in a larger context before exploring specific trials with patients. The pins can also be worn by patients participating in



clinical trials including their family and friends so they can all help in the effort to increase awareness.

We hope these new materials are helpful to you in your recruitment efforts!

To order Posters, visit this page: <https://cissecure.nci.nih.gov/ncipubs/details.asp?pid=4450>

To order Pins, visit this page: <https://cissecure.nci.nih.gov/ncipubs/details.asp?pid=4360>

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ASCO 2009 ANNUAL MEETING Burlington, Vermont ~June 19, 2009

The Vermont Cancer Center (VCC) at the University of Vermont and Fletcher Allen Health Care will present Highlights of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO), a day-long conference on June 19, 2009 at the Sheraton Burlington Hotel & Conference Center.

This annual review provides an invaluable opportunity to hear regional specialists, in the various types and aspects of cancer, review the most important presentations from the annual ASCO meeting. For twelve years, the VCC has coordinated this review as a service to its members, staff and regional physicians,

researchers, nurses, and health care professionals. Dr. Kenneth Miller from Dana Farber Cancer Institute will deliver the afternoon keynote address and will discuss choices in cancer treatment and their impact on a healthy recovery. Please join us!

A complete schedule and registration will be available soon at www.VermontCancer.org. Details will be posted as information becomes available.



NNECOS RECEIVES \$10,000 ASCO GRANT **Tri-State Group Studying Barriers to Clinical Trials Participation**

The NNECOS Board of Directors is pleased to announce the receipt of a \$10,000 ASCO State Affiliate grant in support of the tri-state clinical trials project. A group of community oncologists from across the region are studying cost as a barrier to clinical trial participation in Northern New England. Principal investigators for this project are: Douglas Weckstein MD, NH Oncology Hematology PA; Ivette Emery, PhD, Maine Center for Cancer Medicine; Christian Thomas MD, Vermont Center for Cancer Medicine; and Barbara Shea MD, Seacoast Cancer Center. The project is also supported by \$11,700 in NNECOS funds.



will cover the cost of postage and three daytime investigator meetings. The team hopes to utilize the data obtained from the study to devise targeted strategies to ameliorate barriers to trial participation that exist in the community oncology practice setting.

In approving this grant request, the board expressed great enthusiasm for this strategically important project whose goal is in direct alignment with NNECOS' mission "to ensure the availability of and access to high quality oncology care in our region," which is also an excellent complement to our ongoing access to care study being conducted with state cancer registries from Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont.

This team has developed a protocol to assess the reasons that patients decline or are unable to participate in clinical trials. The survey will be issued to patients in four community based oncology practices in Northern New England with established clinical trial programs. The practices provide a cross-section of geographic, economic, and clinical trial infrastructure conditions. Grant funding

The board has invited the team to present findings at a future NNECOS meeting.

This is the third ASCO grant secured by NNECOS since 2005! Congratulations to all for continuing to lead the way in collaborative projects for the benefit of oncology care across the region.

OOPS!

Has Your NNECOS Membership Lapsed?

Are you still a member of the region's premiere professional, not for profit oncology society? Not sure?

Email necos@comcast.net or visit http://www.necos.org/NNECOS_Website/Members/ and check if your name is listed. We value your participation and hope that you will continue to work with us to assure the availability of and access to high quality oncology care in our region.

Dues renewal payments can be sent to:

NNECOS, PO BOX 643, SANDOWN, NH 03873



Save the date for your ocean side escape!



Samoset Resort ~ October 23-24, 2009

The 2009 Annual Meeting Planning Committee is well on its way to pulling together an AMAZING agenda for this year's annual meeting. The perfect blend of educational sessions and collegial networking, NNECOS raises the bar again for its 2009 meeting. Beginning with a networking lunch on Friday, immerse yourself in the beauty of the region and the collegial experience that only a NNECOS meeting can provide. Old favorites and new surprises combine to provide more than a dozen general and breakout sessions for your oncology care team, concluding with a head and neck cancer case presentation panel on Saturday afternoon. Additional details will be released as they become available, but mark your calendar today for this weekend you simply won't want to miss.

YOUR FEEDBACK IS IMPORTANT TO US

We are interested in your feedback and suggestions. Please send your comments and suggestions for future issues to nneCOS@comcast.net.

Feel free to forward this issue of NNECOS News to your colleagues who may not be current members of Northern New England Clinical Oncology Society. If you would prefer not to receive future e-mail correspondence from NNECOS, please reply to this message and type "remove" in the subject line.



NEWS FROM OUR SUPPORTERS

"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 nneCOS@comcast.net.

NNECOS wishes to thank all of our Supporters for their contributions in support of the mission of the society, to ensure the availability of and access to high quality oncology care in our region.