



**2008 CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP/SUPPORTER NEWS:**

FLASCO is pleased to announce that **Celgene** has become a Gold Member for 2008.

**FLASCO PROGRAM COMMITTEE: Gerardo Colon-Otero, MD, Chairman**  
**4<sup>th</sup> Annual Clinical Breakthroughs & Challenges in Hematologic Malignancies Conference**

FLASCO is pleased to co-sponsor this Conference with USF Health, Moffitt Cancer Center and the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. It will be held at Disney's Grand Floridian Resort & Spa, Lake Buena Vista, FL on Saturday, January 19, 2008.

**2007 SAN ANTONIO BREAST CANCER SYMPOSIUM UPDATES:**

**Arimidex<sup>®</sup> Reduces Risk of Breast Cancer Recurrence (12/18/2007)**

Data released show a continued benefit of Arimidex when compared to tamoxifen in treating postmenopausal women with hormone receptor-positive (HR+) early breast cancer. Results of the ATAC (A RIMIDEX, T amoxifen, A lone or in C ombination) trial, represent a median follow-up of more than eight years and show an absolute reduction in the risk of recurrence and distant recurrence with Arimidex. The ATAC trial is one of the world's longest and largest breast cancer studies and is supported by AstraZeneca.

**Tykerb<sup>®</sup> Plus Xeloda<sup>®</sup> Shows Benefits Against Brain Metastases (12/19/2007)**

According to the results of a study the targeted agent Tykerb<sup>®</sup> (lapatinib), used in combination with the chemotherapy drug Xeloda<sup>®</sup> (capecitabine), reduces the size of brain metastases in some women with previously-treated HER2-positive breast cancer.

**Gene Influences Tamoxifen Response (12/19/2007)**

The effectiveness of tamoxifen in preventing breast cancer is lower among women who carry a gene variant linked with poor tamoxifen metabolism.

**Denosumab Improves Bone Density in Breast Cancer Patients (12/18/2007)**

According to the results of a Phase III clinical trial the experimental drug denosumab significantly improves bone density among women with non-metastatic breast cancer treated with an aromatase inhibitor.

**Zometa<sup>®</sup> Prevents Bone Loss in Breast Cancer Patients (12/18/2007)**

Studies indicate that Zometa<sup>®</sup> (zoledronic acid) effectively prevents bone loss among postmenopausal breast cancer patients treated with an aromatase inhibitor, and among premenopausal breast cancer patients treated with a combination of hormonal therapies.

**Hypofractionated Radiation Therapy Offers More Convenient Breast Cancer Treatment (12/17/2007)**

Long-term results from a study conducted in Canada suggest that hypofractionated radiation therapy (radiation therapy administered in fewer visits with a higher dose of radiation at each visit) has comparable efficacy and cosmetic outcome as conventional radiation therapy in the treatment of node-negative breast cancer.

**Adjuvant Taxotere<sup>®</sup> Improves Breast Cancer Survival (12/14/2007)**

According to the results of a study adjuvant chemotherapy with Taxotere<sup>®</sup> (docetaxel) and cyclophosphamide results in better survival than adjuvant chemotherapy with doxorubicin and cyclophosphamide.

**Oncotype DX<sup>™</sup> Predicts Recurrence Risk in Node-positive Breast Cancer (12/14/2007)**

According to the results of a study the Oncotype DX<sup>™</sup> test may help guide chemotherapy decisions among women with node-positive, estrogen receptor-positive breast cancer.

### **High-Dose Chemotherapy Doesn't Improve Overall Breast Cancer Survival (12/14/2007)**

According to a combined analysis of 15 clinical trials, high-dose chemotherapy followed by autologous stem cell transplant modestly improves disease-free survival but does not significantly improve overall survival among women with node-positive breast cancer.

### **LEGISLATIVE UPDATES:**

#### **Congress Approves Medicare Bill (Source: ASCO)**

Congress has passed a Medicare bill that would avert the scheduled 10.1% cut by replacing it with a 0.5% increase in Medicare payments for first six months of 2008. This means the Congress would need to act before July 2008, or the cut will go into effect at that time. The bill, S. 2499, also:

- Implements recommendations from a report released by the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of the Inspector General in 2006 to require the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to adjust its Average Sales Price (ASP) calculation to use volume-weighted ASPs, based on actual sales volume. The impact of this provision is difficult to determine, but it may result in decreases in payments for some Part B drugs.
- Extends the physician quality reporting system.
- Extends funding for the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) through March 2009.

For more information, contact ASCO's Cancer Policy & Clinical Affairs Department at 703-299-1050 or [publicpolicy@asco.org](mailto:publicpolicy@asco.org).

#### **Legislation Extends 2007 Payment Rates for Radioimmunotherapy Agents (Source: ASH)**

In addition to a physician payment fix, the Medicare, Medicaid & SCHIP Extension Act of 2007 provides an extension of the 2007 payment methodology for radioimmunotherapy agents, used in treatment of lymphoma, through June 2008. In the 2008 Hospital Outpatient Prospective Payment Rule, CMS had announced a new bundled payment structure that would have cut reimbursement for this service by 50 percent, therefore limiting its provision.

If you have any questions or need additional information about any of the items in this Update, please contact the ASH Government Relations and Practice office at 202-776-0544 or via e-mail at [grassroots@hematology.org](mailto:grassroots@hematology.org)

### **BLUE CROSS/BLUE SHIELD:**

#### **Blue Cross issues with Rituxan denials: (Source: Michelle Smith Flowers, OMF)**

Both State and Federal Blue Cross are self-funded groups. They make their own guidelines and rules. BCBS administers the benefits and processes the claims but the individual plans make their own coverage decisions. They have their own review and appeals process. The dollar limit for drugs is set at the lower end of the scale and our State Blue Cross is attempting to address this issue but.....meanwhile any claim for Rituxan where the billed amount for drug is \$5000.00 or over will most likely be denied and require you to appeal and send documentation.

The good news is this department is fairly current therefore, claims should be processed quickly, according to the Blue Cross source.

### **CMS UPDATES:**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has made available the Medicare Part B Drug and Biological Average Sales Price (ASP) Payment Amounts for January 1, 2008 to March 31, 2008 on the CMS website at [http://www.cms.hhs.gov/McrPartBDrugAvgSalesPrice/01a\\_2008aspfiles.asp](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/McrPartBDrugAvgSalesPrice/01a_2008aspfiles.asp). The files are located in the "Downloads" section of this web page.

### **FCSO UPDATES:**

#### **Change in Certification-Based Action on Mammography - Last Modified: 12/18/2007**

Effective April 1, 2008, Medicare will deny all claims for screening or diagnostic mammography services rather than return them to the provider or return as unprocessable, if the appropriate FDA certification status is not listed on the claim. [MM5577]

**Part B Electronic and Paper Remittance Notice Corrections - Last Modified: 12/18/2007**

Important information concerning Medicare Part B electronic and paper remittance advice notices for Claims Received 11/20/07 - all corrected ERA files and paper remits have been reissued.

<http://www.floridamedicare.com/EDI/Articles/116911.asp>

**Multiple Procedure Payment Reduction for Mohs Micrographic Surgery**

Under the multiple procedure payment reduction policy, payment for subsequent surgical procedures performed during the same operative session by the same physician is reduced by 50 percent. The Mohs surgery codes have been exempt from the multiple procedure payment reduction rules since the inception of the physician fee schedule.

Effective for dates of service on or after January 1, 2008, the multiple procedure indicator for CPT codes 17311 and 17313 will be changed from "No payment adjustment rules for multiple procedures apply" to "Standard payment adjustment rules for multiple procedures apply." Therefore, subsequent procedures will be subject to the 50 percent reduction when performed on the same date of service. More information is available in the Final Rule Physician Fee Schedule at

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/physicianfeesched/downloads/CMS-1385-FC.pdf>

**ASH UPDATES:**

**ASH is offering two Highlights of ASH Sessions from the 2007 Annual Meeting.**

- February 1-2, 2008 – Seattle, WA
- February 8-9, 2008 – Austin, TX Early-bird registration will be available only through **December 31**, to register please go to [www.hematology.org/meetings/highlights](http://www.hematology.org/meetings/highlights).

**QUESTION OF THE WEEK:**

What financial software company are you using in your practice? Are you happy with this service?

**PLEASE FAX RESPONSES TO: Dorothy Green Phillips - 813.349.4472**

**PLEASE E-MAIL RESPONSES TO: [Dorothy.Green@cancer.org](mailto:Dorothy.Green@cancer.org)**

Do you have a question you would like to ask other FLASCO Members? If so, please send to FLASCO Executive Director – questions will be circulated and answers will be provided either in the next Fax Blast or by e-mail to the membership. Please see Questions & Responses on an issue on a separate document included with this fax blast.

**CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP/SPONSORSHIP: (January 1 – December 31, 2007)**

FLASCO Members extends a big thanks to all of our 2007 Corporate Members/Sponsors

**PLATINUM**

Astra Zeneca  
Genentech  
Oncology Supply/ION  
Sanofi-Aventis  
Bristol-Myers Squibb  
Eli Lilly  
Bayer/Onyx  
Ortho Biotech  
Abraxis Oncology

**GOLD**

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GlaxoSmithKline Celgene  
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Pfizer  
Amgen

**SILVER**

Genomic Health, Inc.  
Talecris Biotherapeutics  
Millennium  
Novartis

**BRONZE**

Oncology Pharmaceutical Services

**FLASCO EVENTS:**

**January 19, 2008** – 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Clinical Breakthroughs & Challenges In Hematologic Malignancies- Disney's Grand Floridian Resort & Spa, Lake Buena Vista

**March 7-8, 2008** – FLASCO Spring Meeting – Tampa Airport Marriott Hotel

**November 7-8, 2008** – FLASCO Fall Meeting – Tampa Airport Marriott Hotel

**FLASCO Contact Information:**

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