The Association of Northern California Oncologists (ANCO) was organized in 1990 to be an advocate for, educate, and inform practicing hematologists/oncologists. ANCO currently represents 593 hematologists/oncologists throughout northern California who practice in the community as well as at the regional academic cancer centers—Stanford University, UC Davis, and UC San Francisco—and The Permanente Medical Group. We serve the interests of our physician members, their nurses and practice managers, and people living with cancer. ANCO is a member of the Association of Community Cancer Centers (ACCC), a state/regional affiliate of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO), and (along with the Medical Oncology Association of Southern California or MOASC) the specialty delegation representative for hematology/oncology at the California Medical Association (CMA).

ANCO is the regional resource for the Northern California cancer community. We provide in-depth education, connections to clinical trials, a robust job portal and vital advocacy efforts to empower hematologists/oncologists to maximize their academic and clinical expertise resulting in the best care for patients.

We put clearly defined objectives into practice:

- **Disseminate the latest and best information** to our members to dramatically impact the practice of hematology/oncology.

- **Provide the latest clinical education** to physicians and nurses and **professional education** to physicians, nurses, and practice managers.

- **Serve as a committed advocate and liaison** for our members before government, private, and corporate entities from coast to coast.

- **Play an active role in the reimbursement environment** on behalf of physicians, nurses, managers, and people living with cancer.
Under the direction of the Board of Directors and leadership of President Daniel P. Mirda, MD, and Executive Director Courtney G. Flookes, ANCO continues to make progress in accomplishing its goal and objectives. The 2020 Annual Report summarizes the activities and accomplishments of 2020 and describes plans for 2021.

Administration

A full-time Executive Director under the direction of the ANCO Officers and Board of Directors efficiently and effectively manages ANCO. Fundraising efforts continue to be successful through the Corporate Membership Program. ANCO renewed the Institutional Memberships of Stanford University, UC Davis, and UC San Francisco and the Group Membership for The Permanente Medical Group. And, ANCO retained most current and recruited some new physician members. In conclusion, ANCO is a financially sound organization that is proud to be viewed by government, corporate, and other medical organizations throughout California and the United States as a leader among state oncology societies.

Specifically:

- ANCO’s Board of Directors met on one occasion (in January), teleconferenced six times (in February, April, June, August, October, and December), and communicated via e-mail on many occasions. Summary minutes of these Board meetings are available from the ANCO office. Among the items discussed and acted upon by the Board were:
  - nominations and elections to the Board.
  - elections of a Vice President and Treasurer (for two-year terms).
  - an FY2020 budget for the Association.
  - organization of the annual Board planning meeting.
  - funding another ANCO ASCO Northern California Young Investigator Award.
  - funding ANCO Travel Awards.
  - rebranding ANCO and enhancing member communications and the ANCO website.
- designation of ANCO representatives to various forums (e.g., ACCC, ASCO, ASH, CMA, MOASC, and NCCN).

- advocacy efforts on behalf of individual ANCO members and hematologists/oncologists in general before ASCO’s State Affiliate Council and the California Medical Association; Noridian/JEMAC’s Contractor Advisory Committee (for Medicare) and DHCS/MediCal; state and national regulatory and legislative bodies (i.e., California State Legislature and Congress); and, a variety of private insurance companies.

- clinical and professional education proposals; and, cosponsored or co-marketed programs organized by ACCC, ASCO, ASH, and Corporate and Institutional Members.

The Board will continue to meet and teleconference regularly in 2021. Group and Institutional Member contacts will be routinely included in ANCO Board meetings. ANCO and MOASC Boards of Directors will continue to be invited to each other’s meetings.

- 2020 will end with a deficit of approximately $30,000 and assets of approximately $775,577. (Exact financial information will be available after December 31, 2020.)

The FY2021 budget will be balanced. There will be no increases in any individual membership dues (i.e., Government, Regular, and Retired). However, group membership dues rates continue to be adjusted to make the per physician membership rates relatively equivalent between all the group membership categories (i.e., Institutional, Group-TPMG, and Multi-Site Private Practice).

- $345,000 was raised through ANCO’s Corporate Memberships during 2020. Nine (9) new Corporate Members were added to the roster in 2020 (i.e., Deciphera, BeiGene, Epizyme, GlaxoSmithKline, Guardant Health, Immunomedics, MorphoSys US, Natera, Oncopeptides and TerSera) and seven (6) Corporate Members did not renew their memberships for 2020 (i.e., Amgen, Array BioPharma, Celgene, Helsinn Oncology, Karyopharm, Sandoz Biopharmaceuticals, and Tempus Labs).

ANCO is very appreciative of the support provided by our Corporate Members:
Sustaining Level
AbbVie • AstraZeneca • Incyte • Lilly Oncology • Pfizer Oncology • Taiho Oncology
Takeda Oncology • Verastem Oncology

Diamond Level
BeiGene • Bristol-Myers Squibb Oncology • Eisai • Genentech BioOncology
Janssen Oncology • Merck • Pharmacyclics

Gold Level
Adaptive Biotechnologies • Astellas Oncology • Bayer • Coherus Biosciences • Exact Sciences • Exelixis • Jazz Pharmaceuticals • Kite Pharmaceuticals
Novartis Oncology • Sanofi Genzyme • Seattle Genetics • Stemline Therapeutics

Silver Level
Agios Pharmaceuticals • Alexion Pharmaceuticals • Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals
Caris Life Sciences • Daiichi Sankyo • Foundation Medicine • Gilead Sciences
GlaxoSmithKline • Guardant Health • Heron Therapeutics • Immunomedics • InformedDNA • Ipsen Biopharmaceuticals • MorphoSys USA • Puma Biotechnology • Regeneron • TerSera Therapeutics • Sun Pharma • Teva Oncology

Current *Corporate Members* will be asked to renew and encouraged to increase their membership support level in 2021. Non-renewing *Corporate Members* will be asked to rejoin ANCO. And, several new *Corporate Memberships* will be solicited.

- ANCO has three *Institutional Members*—*Stanford University, UC Davis*, and *UC San Francisco*. In addition, ANCO has one *Group Member*—*The Permanente Medical Group*.

Current *Group* and *Institutional Members* will be asked to renew and additional organizations will be invited to join.

- There are currently 593 physician members in ANCO, an increase of 33 (5.6%) from 2019. Of these, 137 are community (135) or government (2) based hematologists/oncologists, 10 are retired from full-time medical practice, 320 are affiliated with one of the three regional academic cancer centers—*Stanford University* (121), *UC Davis* (84), and *UC San Francisco* (115)—and 127 practice at *The Permanente Medical Group* (at 20 locations). One hundred one (101) members practice at seven (7) multi-site (often multi-disciplinary) community practices (ranging in size from 5 to 48 physicians at 2 to
14 sites). Finally, 33 members practice in 18 single-site practices (ranging in size from 1 to 5 physicians).

Individual members will be asked to renew and new memberships will be solicited in 2020.

Advocacy

ANCO advocates on behalf of all hematologists/oncologists to improve the healthcare environment for physicians, their nurses and practice managers, and people living with cancer. In general, the Board deliberated on and recommended policies, and was represented and communicated these policies at a variety of forums in 2020.

Specifically:

- **ANCO sent representatives to ASCO’s State Affiliate Council meetings.**

- **ANCO continued its relationship with Noteware Government Relations, a Sacramento-based advocacy firm; monitored cancer-related and general medical legislation; and, worked with the CMA to help pass, improve, and/or defeat cancer-related legislation, amongst other pieces of legislation; including,**

  **SB 275: Health Care and Essential Workers: personal protective equipment:** This bill requires hospitals, skilled nursing facilities and dialysis clinics to maintain a 90 day “pandemic” level of PPE, beginning on January 1, 2023 or one year after regulations are crafted to define “pandemic level” of PPE, whichever is later. ANCO and other representatives of organized medicine were successful in our advocacy to get physician practices amended out of the bill. The bill does still require the state to develop its own stockpile of PPE, but that was also amended to be “only upon appropriation” from the Legislature. **SUCCESS: Signed by the Governor as amended.**

  **SB 793: Flavored tobacco products:** The bill bans the sale of most flavored tobacco products in the State. This is a monumental achievement in public health and specifically cancer prevention policy that has been attempted many times before, but always falling to the strong advocacy of the tobacco industry. This year with ANCO’s support and that of dozens of other health care advocates, the Legislature had the resolve to move it forward and the Governor was eager to sign it. The tobacco companies continue to oppose the policy and are pursuing a referendum on the
measure, which is estimated to appear on the November 2020 statewide ballot.

*SUCCESS*: **Signed by the Governor**

**SB 977: Health care system consolidation: Attorney General (AG) approval and enforcement:** This measure would have provided the AG authority over nearly all health care partnerships, transactions, mergers, and affiliations. It extended the AG approval requirement on transactions to include physician practices, laboratories, investor owned hospitals, etc. The Attorney General was seeking the authority to deny any transaction unless the health care provider can prove it will improve clinical integration, available and access to services in an underserved population. Civil fines of $1 million or twice the gross gain to the system. Nearly the entire health care provider field opposed the bill, and it was one of the hard fought bills to bitter end of the Legislative Session. We were successful in getting it held without enough votes to pass. *SUCCESS*: **Held on the Assembly Floor.**

**SB 983: Unused Medication: Cancer Medication Recycling.** This bill, sponsored by ANCO and the American Cancer Society, Cancer Action Network, was prepared to move this year, but was held at the beginning of session as a result of the Legislature’s recess due to the State’s COVID-19 response. The bill would have permitted oncologists to take back patients’ unused and unadulterated medication and provide it to other patients in need. The Author’s office is committed to supporting our effort, and we are working with the Cancer Society on a 2021 strategy. *PAUSED*: **Held due to COVID-19.**

**AB 2144: Health Care Coverage: Step Therapy.** ANCO was on the Steering Committee of advocates leading the campaign for this bill, which will amend the step therapy and prior authorization processes -- ensuring that they work for patients and doctors, and not just insurance companies. The bill would require insurers to grant step therapy exemptions at physician requests, make insurers decisions more timely, and ensure qualified physicians are used by insurers to make many of these decisions. *PAUSED*: **Held due to COVID-19.**

**Improve Access to Tele-healthcare.** In the State’s early response to COVID-19, advocates urged the Administration to amend state policy to allow for greater flexibility in the delivery and reimbursement of healthcare via telephonic and other electronic methodologies. The Administration complied, but that flexibility is tied to state of emergency declarations – which continue. We continue to advocate to maintain access to tele-healthcare after the COVID-19 state of emergency declarations are ended. The Administration is interested in having a thorough exploration of the data about the care provided and take a holistic look at telehealth policy. This discussion is ongoing in Sacramento over the fall, and ANCO will be actively involved through the rest of the year and will be poised to support strong policy in 2021. *Ongoing.*

- Hematology/Oncology, as represented by ANCO and MOASC, was represented at the CMA’s *Specialty Delegation, Council on Legislation,* and *House of Delegates.*
• ANCO communicated with Noridian/JEMAC to discuss Medicare issues in California and the Department of Health Care Services to discuss Medicaid (DHCS/MediCal) issues.

• ANCO communicated its concern with coverage policies at a variety of private insurance companies.

ANCO will continue to advocate on behalf of its constituents before government agencies, payers and corporations, and medical societies in 2020. The Board of Directors welcomes and encourages feedback from members on issues of importance that require organizational intervention and advocacy efforts.

Meetings
The ANCO Board of Directors continued to implement its clinical and professional educational strategy in 2020.

Specifically:

• Clinical Education Meetings. Seven (7) ANCO-organized clinical education meetings took place in 2019:

  Best of the San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium 2019 (in cooperation with SABCS and Encore Medical Education; in Berkeley, January 2020)

  20th Multidisciplinary Management of Cancers: A Case-based Approach (in collaboration with the Stanford Cancer Institute, UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center, and UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center; Virtual, June 2020)

  Regional Quarterly Hematological Malignancies Updates (Virtually September 2020, November 2020, December 2020)

  ANCO’s ASCO Highlights (Virtually, August 2020)

ANCO also cooperated in marketing ACCC, ASCO, ASH, and Corporate and Institutional Member meetings; and, other oncology meetings in 2020.

In 2021, ANCO will co-host a Best of the San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium Highlights 2020, organize another series of Regional Quarterly Hematological Malignancies Updates, and host ANCO’s ASCO Highlights 2021. In addition, ANCO and the Stanford Cancer
Institute, UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center, and UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center will cosponsor the 21st Multidisciplinary Management of Cancers: A Case-based Approach Virtually in March 2021.

- **Professional Education Meetings.** ANCO’s professional education meetings and webcasts present speakers on topics about the management of office-based medical practices and hematology/oncology reimbursement techniques. Participants not only learn at these meetings, but they also form a network of resources to turn to when billing and reimbursement and management issues arise. Two (2) professional education webcasts/meetings were held in 2020:

  - **Hot Topics in Reimbursement Q1 2020** (webcast, January 2020)
  - **2020 Professional Education Meeting** (in Berkeley, October 2020)

Professional education meetings and webcasts on timely issues of importance are anticipated for 2021.

Meeting materials are available online at https://anco.org/membership/meeting-materials/.

**Information Dissemination**

The ANCO FAX News, a biweekly summary of advocacy, educational, membership, and Association news, was rebranded into The ANCO Report in 2019. The ANCO Report was e-mailed weekly to all ANCO members.

ANCO maintains an updated online edition of the Directory of Members. Besides a comprehensive listing of ANCO physician members, nurses, and managers, the Directory also includes an updated list of Corporate Member drug reimbursement and patient assistance programs and ANCO’s Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws.

ANCO will continue to enhance The ANCO Report and www.anco.org in 2021. The California Oncology Weekly will continue to be posted to the website will no longer be distributed to the membership via e-mail. Both the Directory and drug reimbursement and patient assistance programs will be regularly updated at
www.anco.org/ANCODIR.pdf and https://anco.org/practice-and-patient-reimbursement-assistance-programs/, respectively. ANCO plans to make these two resources searchable in 2021.

**New Executive Director & Address**

José Luis González, ANCO Executive Director since 1993, retired effective June 30, 2020. And Courtney G. Flookes took over the role of Executive Director. In addition, ANCO’s mailing and physical address have changed to offices in Napa.

**Information**

For more information about ANCO membership and activities, please contact:

Courtney G. Flookes, Executive Director  
Association of Northern California Oncologists  
4225 Solano Avenue, #764 • Napa, CA 94558  
(415) 472-3960 • courtney@anco.org • director@anco.org  
www.anco.org