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 616 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 Thach-Giao Truong, MD, and Executive Director Courtney G. Flookes, ANCO continues to make progress in accomplishing its goal and objectives. The 2021 Annual Report summarizes the activities and accomplishments of 2021 and describes plans for 2022.

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 November), 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 FY2021 budget for the Association.
  - organization of the annual Board planning meeting.
  - funding another ANCO ASCO Northern California Young Investigator Award.
  - 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 comarketed programs organized by ACCC, ASCO, ASH, and Corporate and Institutional Members.

The Board will continue to meet and teleconference regularly in 2022. 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.

- 2021 will end with a surplus of approximately $227,000 and assets of approximately $640,000. (Exact financial information will be available after December 31, 2021.)

The FY2022 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).

- $482,000 was raised through ANCO’s Corporate Memberships during 2021. Six (10) new Corporate Members were added to the roster in 2021 (i.e., ADC Therapeutics, AMGEN, Grail, Mylan, Myovant, Oncocyte, Oncopeptides, SecuraBio, LLC, TerSera Therapeutics, and TG Therapeutics) and three (3) Corporate Members did not renew their memberships for 2021 (i.e. InformedDNA, Regeneron, and Verastem).

ANCO is very appreciative of the support provided by our Corporate Members:
Sustaining Level
AbbVie • Astra Zeneca • BeiGene • Bristol-Myers Squibb Company • Eli Lilly and Company • Glaxo SmithKline • Grail • Incyte • MorphoSys USA • Pfizer • Taiho Oncology • Takeda

Diamond Level
Oncopeptides • AMGEN • Eisai • Foundation Medicine • Genentech BioOncology • Janssen Oncology • Merck • Pharmacyclics

Gold Level
Deciphera • Adaptive Biotechnologies • ADC Therapeutics • Astellas Oncology • Bayer • Coherus Biosciences • Daiichi Sankyo • EMD Serono • Epizyme • Exact Sciences • Exelixis • Imunomedics • Jazz Pharmaceuticals • Kite Pharmaceuticals • Myovant • Natera • Novartis Sanofi Genzyme • Seattle Genetics • Stemline Therapeutics • Tempus Labs • TG Therapeutics

Silver Level
Agios Pharmaceuticals • Alexion Pharmaceuticals • Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals • Caris Life Sciences • Guardant Health • Heron Therapeutics • Ipsen Biopharmaceuticals • Mylan Oncotype • Puma Biotechnology • SecuraBio, LLC. • Sun Pharma • TerSera Therapeutics • Teva Oncology

Current Corporate Members will be asked to renew and encouraged to increase their membership support level in 2022. 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 616 physician members in ANCO, an increase of 23 (3.7%) from 2021. Of these, 154 are community (152) or government (2) based hematologists/oncologists, 9 are retired from full-time medical practice, 462 are affiliated with one of the three regional academic cancer centers—Stanford
University (123), UC Davis (89), and UC San Francisco (122)—and 128 practice at The Permanente Medical Group (at 20 locations). One hundred six (106) 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, 40 members practice in 14 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 2021.

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 2021.

Specifically:

• ANCO sent representatives to ASCO’s State Affiliate Council meetings.
• ANCO continued its relationship with NL Short Public Affairs, 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 310 (Rubio): Unused Medication: cancer drug recycling. This bill, sponsored by ANCO, authorizes the creation of a statewide cancer drug recycling program that supports patients’ access to needed anti-cancer medications. The bill creates a first-in-the-nation program that allows oncologists to accept unused, unneeded medication from their patients and their family members and redistribute that medication to other patients in need. This program will help patients access needed medications in a timely manner, while reducing the waste of expensive, life-saving medications. Signed by the Governor.

SB 347 (Arambula): Step Therapy reforms utilization management insurance practices that hinder access to treatments for patients with cancer and other conditions and cause negative health outcomes. Supported by ANCO, AB 347 gives doctors the ability to obtain exemptions from insurer’s step therapy requirements and establishes a 24-to-72-hour timeframe in which plans must notify the provider of their decision regarding the step therapy exception request.
AB 32 (Aguiar Curry)/AB 122 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review): ANCO advocated for an extension of all telehealth flexibilities the Administration granted providers at the beginning of the pandemic, ensuring patient access to telemedicine moving forward. After much advocacy and debate, we supported the health budget trailer bill (AB 122), which provides for all telehealth flexibilities to continue until December 2022 and requires the Department of Health Care Services to develop an advisory group to explore the benefits of telehealth and provide input on billing and utilization management protocols. *Signed by the Governor.*

SB 535 (Limon) Biomarker Testing: ANCO engaged with many in the cancer policy community in advocating for better access to biomarker testing for patients. This bill requires for health plans that already cover biomarker testing to provide it without the need for prior authorization for patients with stages 3 and 4. ANCO took a support if amended position on the bill to clarify certain language in the bill and support better access to more patients. *Signed by the Governor.*

AB 1278 (Nazarian): Physicians and surgeons: payments: disclosure: notice. The bill sought to mandate new processes designed to inform patients of payments or transfer of value from a drug or device company to their patient prior to the prescription of that drug or device and requires additional notification of federal transparency laws. ANCO opposed this measure as it would interfere in the patient physician relationship at a critical moment in patient care. *Held in Committee.*

White Bagging: This year, ANCO advocated with the Board of Pharmacy to hold a special informational hearing on the issues of “white bagging” and “brown bagging,” which allows insurers control of where infusions and other medications are purchased. In addition, we were successful in securing lead testimony at the hearing from an ANCO member to highlight the concerns for oncologists and their patients. *Additional work on this issue is ongoing.*

Access to Vaccines. ANCO advocated with the Newsom Administration to prioritize patients with cancer in the distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine, ensuring our most vulnerable and immunocompromised patients have access to
needed preventive care as soon as possible. **ANCO was successful in getting the Governor to prioritize cancer patients in the distribution of the vaccine.**

- 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 2022. 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 2021.

Specifically:

- **Clinical Education Meetings.** Seven (7) ANCO-organized clinical education meetings took place in 2021:
  - **Best of the San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium 2020** (in cooperation with SABCS and Encore Medical Education; virtual, January 2021)
  - **21st 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, March 2021)
  - **Regional Quarterly Hematological Malignancies Updates** (Virtual May 2021, September 2021, and November 2021)
  - **ANCO’s ASCO Highlights** (Virtual, August 2021)
  - **ANCO Connections** (virtually June, July, August, October, November and December) this new initiative was launched in 2021.

ANCO also cooperated in marketing ACCC, ASCO, ASH, and *Corporate* and *Institutional Member* meetings; and, other oncology meetings in 2021.
In 2022, ANCO will co-host a *Best of the San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium Highlights 2021*, organize another series of *Regional Quarterly Hematological Malignancies Updates*, and host ANCO’s *ASCO Highlights 2022*. In addition, ANCO and the Stanford Cancer Institute, UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center, and UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center will cosponsor the 22nd *Multidisciplinary Management of Cancers: A Case-based Approach* in March 2022.

- **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 2021:  
  - *Hot Topics in Reimbursement Q1 2021* (webcast, January 2021)  
  - *2021 Professional Education Meeting* (virtually, October 2021)  
  Professional education meetings and webcasts on timely issues of importance are anticipated for 2022. Meeting materials are available online at https://anco.org/membership/meeting-materials/.

**Information Dissemination**

The *ANCO Report*, a weekly summary of advocacy, educational, membership, and Association news, 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 2022. The *California Oncology Weekly* will continue to be posted to the website. 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 2022.
Information

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

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