



EDITORIAL

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A Very Special Issue

Since 2011, *Federal Practitioner* and the Association of VA Hematology/Oncology have teamed up to create the “Advances in Hematology and Oncology” special issues. The collaboration has been a rewarding one for everyone involved, and we trust it will continue for years to come.

The issues have showcased the broad experience and expertise of VA hematology and oncology care providers. Over the years, we’ve highlighted the important research often coming out of the VA and have brought that knowledge to an audience that goes well beyond the 900 or so AVAHO members.

Still, that doesn’t seem like enough. More often than not, primary care providers are the first line of defense for patients. More important, as survivorship expands and new therapies continue to increase overall survival, all providers across the federal health care systems are treating patients after their diagnosis. There have been significant developments recently in hematology and oncology, and primary care providers are car-

ing for more patients than ever who have cancer and leukemia, not only at the VA, but also at the PHS and DoD. This research is relevant to the entire *Federal Practitioner* audience, and we felt it was important to share as widely as possible.

The 7 articles included in this special issue are broad and diverse, illustrating the high degree of specialization that is occurring in the fields of hematology and oncology. These features cover breast cancer, chronic myelogenous leukemia, prostate cancer, mantle cell lymphoma, chronic lymphocytic leukemia, pancreatic cancer, and melanoma. Sometimes, the articles focus on highly specific topics for specialists, such as the role of autologous hematopoietic stem cell transplantation in mantle cell lymphoma. Other times, the articles are aimed at a primary care audience, providing an essential update on prostate cancer survivorship care. In either case, we hope you will find these articles valuable and worthwhile.

To compliment the features, we added a new Patient Information hand-out on hospice care as well as some re-

cent news updates in our Clinical Digest department. We also wanted to echo these important research updates with audio interviews, blogs, and other online exclusive features.

We would like to thank the Association of VA Hematology/Oncology (AVAHO) for their cooperation and help in putting together this series. The AVAHO mission is to facilitate interaction and cooperation among VA hematology and oncology health care providers and to enhance professional careers and improve patient care, and we are honored to be able to help carry out that mission. The AVAHO Annual Meeting will be September 12-14, 2014, in Portland, Oregon. For more information visit avaho.org.

We would also like to thank Paulette Mehta, MD, MPH, and Peter Silberstein, MD, for their significant efforts and the time they put into making this special issue possible. Their commitment to creating this issue and to ensuring that *Federal Practitioner* remains on top of the latest advances in trends and practices in these quickly changing fields cannot be understated. ●