



# US Oncology®

Advancing Cancer Care in America

## US Oncology 2011 Legislative Priorities

With more than 1,400 affiliated physicians, US Oncology, Inc., a partner in the McKesson network of health care systems, supports one of the nation's most advanced cancer treatment and research platforms, accelerating the availability and use of the highest quality cancer care in a setting that is close to the patient's home and family.

Our doctors currently treat more than 850,000 cancer patients per year across 40 states. Over 80 percent of cancer patients in the U.S. receive their cancer treatment from community-based oncology practices like those which receive support from US Oncology.

At US Oncology we use our expertise to support every aspect of the cancer care delivery system – from the development of evidence-based treatment pathways linked to health information technology to patient financial support services and treatment navigation – helping to increase the quality and safety of cancer care across the nation.

The following priorities will guide our national legislative agenda for 2011 as we work with policymakers to preserve and enhance patients' access to advanced cancer care in the community setting.

***Ensuring continued access to quality cancer care in the community:*** Integrated cancer care delivered in the community – allowing patients to receive comprehensive chemotherapy and radiation therapy at the same site close to home – provides a multitude of advantages for patients. These include improved quality of care, continuity of treatment, lower costs, greater convenience, access to promising clinical trials, ease of treatment and greater collaboration among physicians.

Now more than ever, medical and radiation oncology are inextricably linked in cancer treatment, and patients have come to rely on this standard of care. In addition, numerous studies have supported evidenced-based results that ascertain increased rates of survival when a combination of chemotherapy and radiation therapy is prescribed.

***Providing efficient distribution of essential cancer care drugs:*** Prompt pay discount (PPD) legislation (H.R. 905) would correct a financing problem that – due to a long-standing improper reimbursement calculation for drugs and biologicals under Medicare Part B – threatens the efficient distribution of cancer drugs to community-based cancer centers, which provide treatment to more than 80 percent of America's cancer patients.

In addition to putting the nation's community cancer centers at risk, costs to Medicare and to taxpayers are expected to increase significantly if this payment problem is not soon corrected.

***Supporting the creation and use of specialty-specific ACOs:*** US Oncology has wholeheartedly embraced the use of specialty-specific accountable care organizations (ACOs) in improving coordination, transparency and quality in health care delivery – and, as such, supported the inclusion of specialty-specific ACOs in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.



# US Oncology®

Advancing Cancer Care in America

Through our own *Innovent Oncology* platform, which brings together physicians, patients, health plans and employers to address the top oncology cost drivers within a collaborative model of care, we have seen significant savings while maintaining and improving care quality. We believe that key elements of this platform – including clinically proven treatment options combined with HIT, valuable patient support services and advance care planning – can and should be utilized through specialty-specific ACOs to greatly enhance cancer research and standards of care.

***Ensuring cancer patients' access to life-saving oral chemotherapy drugs:*** By calling for equal coverage of oral chemotherapy drugs along with IV chemotherapy, the “Cancer Drug Coverage Parity Act” would help ensure that cancer patients have access to these life-saving drugs – which can often provide greater convenience and physical comfort in treatment.

In addition to the patient benefits of taking these drugs at home, many new oncology treatments – in fact, an estimated 25 percent of the 400 oncology agents in the 2011 drug pipeline – are being developed in oral form. With the coming availability of these innovative oral treatments, health care coverage must catch up to recently delivered advances in science.

***Enhancing Medicare coverage for cancer treatment education:*** When complete treatment information and resources are shared with cancer patients early in their course of treatment, many cancer medication side effects and symptoms may be detected early and appropriately countered.

The “Assuring and Improving Cancer Treatment Education and Cancer Symptom Management Act” would close existing gaps in such education services and encourage physicians to provide full education to cancer patients early in their treatment, when it can matter most.