

Dear Cancer Liaison Physicians:

I hope you had an opportunity to attend the Commission on Cancer (CoC) CLP meeting on April 19, 2023. If you weren't able to attend, we urge you to view the recording and slides, which is posted under the CLP Meetings section on the [CoC website](#). I hope you'll find this meeting summary and the additional CoC updates to be useful in your role as the CLP for your cancer program.

### **Cancer Liaison Physician Meeting**

Cancer Liaison Program **Chair Quyen Chu, MD, FACS**, and Vice-Chair **Maria Castaldi, MD, FACS**, welcomed CLPs to the first meeting of 2023, and reminded them of a few upcoming meetings that they should consider attending:

- ACS Quality and Safety Conference
  - July 10-13, 2023 in Minneapolis, MN
- CoC Fall Meetings
  - October 22, 2023 in Boston, MA
- 2024 ACS Cancer Programs Conference
  - February 22-24, 2024 in Austin, TX

Dr. Chu reminded CLPs that nominations for the 2023 CLP Outstanding Performance Award will open in May. More information and submission forms are available on the CoC [website](#). Dr. Chu also asked CLPs to help promote the 2023 CoC Research Paper Competition. Submissions in either the Clinical Research or Basic Science categories will be accepted through July 7, 2023. More information about the Competition is available on the CoC [website](#).

Following Dr. Chu's CoC update, **Chantal Reyna, MD, FACS**, presented an update from the Cancer Surgery Standards Program Education Committee. Dr. Chu and Dr. Castaldi then welcomed a panel of CLPs to discuss best practices, common challenges, and tips for success. The CLPs on the panel included **Ingrid Lizarraga, MBBS, FACS**, University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, Iowa City, IA; **Julie Monroe, MD** White Plains Hospital, White Plains, NY; **Richard White, MD, FACS**, Atrium Health, Charlotte, NC; and **Jason Wilson, MD, FACS**, Morton Plant Mease Health Care, Palm Harbor, FL

The CoC is planning a second virtual CLP meeting this year, on October 17, as well as a CLP/State Chair luncheon at the in-person CoC meetings in Boston on October 22. More information on these events will be sent to you later this summer.

### **ACS Cancer Programs Announces New Committee Membership and Leadership Opportunities**

ACS Cancer Programs is seeking nominations for committee leadership positions and new volunteers for committee membership. Nominations will be open **May 1 – 31**, and new leadership and membership positions will be announced in the fall. Please watch the weekly newsletter [Cancer Programs News](#) and the Cancer Programs [website](#) for more information and links to the application forms. For questions about the new committee membership and leadership opportunities, please contact [cpmembership@facs.org](mailto:cpmembership@facs.org).

### **Cancer Programs Medical Director Dr. Nelson Announces Retirement**

ACS Cancer Programs Medical Director **Heidi Nelson, MD, FACS**, has announced plans to retire later this year. Dr. Nelson, an ACS Fellow and colorectal surgeon from Rochester, MN, joined the ACS staff in 2018, after having served in various leadership roles for the College, including as Director of the ACS Clinical Research Program, Co-Chair of the ACS Oncology Group, and member of the CoC Executive Committee. Prior to joining College staff, she served as Chair, and Vice-Chair for Research, of the

department of surgery, Mayo Clinic, as well as professor of surgery, Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Sciences.

“Through her leadership, vision, and research acumen, ACS Cancer Programs have come together and more closely integrated their strategies and activities,” said ACS Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer Patricia L. Turner, MD, MBA, FACS. “I would like to sincerely thank Dr. Nelson for her years of service and dedication to improving the quality of care for patients with cancer. She has truly made a difference.”

### **COVID-19 Pandemic Will Disrupt Cancer Reporting for Years to Come**

New research from the ACS outlines significant ways that the COVID-19 pandemic destabilized usual patterns of cancer care as reported in the National Cancer Database (NCDB). The research, [published in JAMA Surgery as a Special Communication article](#), describes specific ways that NCDB data models were impacted by the pandemic, offering guidance to centers across the country on how to interpret data from 2020 and onwards. The research also paints a much larger picture of the many disruptions caused by the pandemic outside of the immediate emergency of treating COVID-19 patients. [Read more](#)

### **CoC Seeking Accreditation Site Reviewers**

The CoC is seeking physicians to join its accreditation site reviewer team. Qualified candidates must be actively practicing physicians who specialize in cancer care and employed or affiliated with a CoC-accredited program. Once you have reviewed the [minimum qualifications to be a CoC Site Reviewer](#), please complete and submit the [application](#). Contact [CoC@facs.org](mailto:CoC@facs.org) if you have any questions or would like to learn more about becoming a site reviewer.

### **CoC Releases Standards Update**

On February 27 the CoC released the latest update to its 2020 accreditation standards, [Optimal Resources for Cancer Care \(2020 Standards\)](#). The updated standards and changelog documenting the standards revisions made in this release are available for download on the CoC website.

*Optimal Resources for Cancer Care (2020 Standards)* has been revised to provide the most recent updates to language and terminology for CoC accreditation, clarification edits, and updated compliance measures for Standard 3.2 and Standard 5.1. For more information on the CoC standards, *Optimal Resources for Cancer Care (2020 Standards)*, please visit the [CoC website](#). Questions regarding the CoC accreditation standards should be submitted through the [CAAnswer Forum](#).

### **REMINDER: New Standards In Effect for Networks and Pediatric Programs**

Starting this year, the revised standards for Integrated Network Cancer Programs (INCPs) and National Cancer Institute Networks (NCINs) are now in effect. Pediatric Cancer Programs (PCPs) also have updated requirements. Details of the updated requirements may be found in the Specifications by Category section of [Optimal Resources for Cancer Care \(2020 Standards\)](#).

### **New Resources for CoC Standards 5.7 and 5.8**

The Cancer Surgery Standards Program has developed one-page informational flyers that detail the technical and compliance requirements for CoC Standard 5.7 (Total Mesorectal Excision) and CoC Standard 5.8 (Pulmonary Resection). Each flyer includes a QR code that directs the viewer to the Operative Standards Toolkit, where they can find educational resources related to the standards. We encourage staff at CoC accredited cancer programs to email the flyers to surgeons at their sites or print copies to post where surgeons might view them (e.g., surgery lounges, locker rooms, etc.). Both flyers can be found in the [Operative Standards Toolkit](#) under the individual standard. Questions on the CoC Operative Standards can be sent to [CSSP@facs.org](mailto:CSSP@facs.org).