Looking Back: 20 Years of Colorectal Cancer Treatment Breakthroughs Improve Survival, Advance Evidence-Based Choices

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FORT WASHINGTON, PA — The National Comprehensive Cancer Network® (NCCN®) has published the 20th annual editions of the NCCN Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology (NCCN Guidelines®) for Colon and Rectal Cancers, two of the eight original NCCN Guidelines® published in November 1996.

“A lot has changed in the treatment of colorectal cancer since 1996,” said Al B. Benson, III, MD, FACP, FASCO, Professor of Medicine and Associate Director for Clinical Investigations, Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University, and Chair of the NCCN Guidelines Panels for Colon and Rectal Cancers. “The evolution of treatment includes not only additional chemotherapy agents but also targeted biologic therapies. Physicians now have multiple lines of therapies with more choices of combinations available, which can be broken down appropriately as initial therapy, and therapy following progression.”

Dr. Benson, who has been a member of the NCCN Guidelines Panels for Colon and Rectal Cancers since their inception in 1996, noted that advancements in the continuum of care in metastatic colorectal cancer have resulted in a major improvement in median survival as compared with 1996, and adjuvant chemotherapy for stage III colon cancer with FOLFOX and CapeOx has also improved survival. Further, discovery of molecular markers, such as MSI and KRAS, have set the stage for more targeted patient care.

“The original set of guidelines emphasized multidisciplinary evaluation and multimodality therapy of large bowel cancer,” said Paul F. Engstrom, MD, Professor and Chairman, Medical Oncology, Fox Chase Cancer Center, and founding Chair of the NCCN Guidelines Panels for Colon and
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Rectal Cancers. “Over the years, the guidelines have become the standard of care and the framework for chemotherapy options, as well as chemotherapy reimbursement.”

Today, NCCN develops and publishes a library of 59 NCCN Guidelines, covering 97% of malignant cancers. The NCCN Guidelines are developed and updated through an evidence-based process in which the expert panels integrate comprehensive clinical and scientific data with the judgment of the multidisciplinary panel members and other experts drawn from NCCN Member Institutions. Access to the complete library of NCCN Guidelines is available free-of-charge to clinicians at NCCN.org.

“NCCN is proud to publish the 20th annual editions of the NCCN Guidelines for Colon and Rectal Cancers,” said Robert W. Carlson, MD, Chief Executive Officer, NCCN. “NCCN extends its gratitude to the NCCN Guidelines Panel Members for Colon and Rectal cancers. With their expertise and service, the NCCN Guidelines have indeed provided free, evidence-based treatment recommendations to benefit patients and clinicians in academic and community settings alike.”

On March 12 – 14, 2015, the NCCN 20th Annual Conference: Advancing the Standard of Cancer Care™ will be held at The Diplomat in Hollywood, Florida. In recognition of NCCN’s 20th anniversary, NCCN is planning to hold a special live roundtable during the NCCN Annual Conference comprised of NCCN leadership—past and present—as well as other stakeholders who have had a significant impact on the development, progression, and success of NCCN over the years; noteworthy historical NCCN accomplishments and events will be discussed, as well as the impact NCCN has had and continues to have on the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of cancer care so that patients can live better lives.

To learn more about NCCN, the NCCN Guidelines, and the NCCN 20th Annual Conference, visit NCCN.org.

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About the National Comprehensive Cancer Network

The National Comprehensive Cancer Network® (NCCN®), a not-for-profit alliance of 25 of the world’s leading cancer centers devoted to patient care, research, and education, is dedicated to improving the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of cancer care so that patients can live better lives. Through the leadership and expertise of clinical professionals at NCCN Member
Institutions, NCCN develops resources that present valuable information to the numerous stakeholders in the health care delivery system. As the arbiter of high-quality cancer care, NCCN promotes the importance of continuous quality improvement and recognizes the significance of creating clinical practice guidelines appropriate for use by patients, clinicians, and other health care decision-makers.

The NCCN Member Institutions are: Fred and Pamela Buffett Cancer Center at The Nebraska Medical Center, Omaha, NE; City of Hope Comprehensive Cancer Center, Los Angeles, CA; Dana-Farber/Brigham and Women’s Cancer Center | Massachusetts General Hospital Cancer Center, Boston, MA; Duke Cancer Institute, Durham, NC; Fox Chase Cancer Center, Philadelphia, PA; Huntsman Cancer Institute at the University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT; Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center/Seattle Cancer Care Alliance, Seattle, WA; The Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins, Baltimore, MD; Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University, Chicago, IL; Mayo Clinic Cancer Center, Phoenix/Scottsdale, AZ, Jacksonville, FL, and Rochester, MN; Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, New York, NY; Moffitt Cancer Center, Tampa, FL; The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center - James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute, Columbus, OH; Roswell Park Cancer Institute, Buffalo, NY; Siteman Cancer Center at Barnes-Jewish Hospital and Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis, MO; St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital/The University of Tennessee Health Science Center, Memphis, TN; Stanford Cancer Institute, Stanford, CA; University of Alabama at Birmingham Comprehensive Cancer Center, Birmingham, AL; UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center, La Jolla, CA; UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center, San Francisco, CA; University of Colorado Cancer Center, Aurora, CO; University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center, Ann Arbor, MI; The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, TX; Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center, Nashville, TN; and Yale Cancer Center/Smilow Cancer Hospital, New Haven, CT.

Clinicians, visit NCCN.org. Patients and caregivers, visit NCCN.org/patients.