



ALLIANCE FOR QUALITY PSYCHOSOCIAL CANCER CARE

March 10, 2010

American College of Surgeons
Commission on Cancer
633 N St. Clair
Chicago, IL 60611-3211

Dear Commission on Cancer Members,

The Alliance for Quality Psychosocial Cancer Care was pleased to learn about the Standard 6.1 proposed by the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer Clinical Management Workgroup which would require that:

The cancer committee, or other appropriate leadership body, develops a process to monitor screening of cancer patients for psychosocial distress. Findings of the monitoring are presented at least annually to the cancer committee, or other appropriate leadership body, and are documented in minutes.

We strongly endorse the proposed Standard 6.1. The Alliance is a coalition formed in 2008 to implement key recommendations of the 2007 Institute of Medicine report, *Cancer Care for the Whole Patient: Meeting Psychosocial Health Needs*. The Alliance now has more than thirty member organizations representing a diverse cross section of those who share a commitment to integrating psychosocial screening and related services into the standard of quality care for cancer patients. The Alliance fully supports the new standard being proposed by the Clinical Management Workgroup as it a critical step in fulfilling the recommendations of the IOM and the vision of the Alliance to ensure psychosocial care is integrated into the medical standard of care for people with cancer.

We believe the stated purpose of Standard 6.1 -- to have cancer programs develop a process to incorporate the screening of distress into standard care of oncology patients and to provide patients identified with distress with resources -- complements specific initiatives of the Alliance. In particular, the Alliance has undertaken an effort to create a comprehensive, web-based, searchable list of national and community-based psychosocial services and resources categorized by type of service, cancer diagnosis, state, and special circumstances.

We appreciate the approach taken in the proposed language to make it flexible and reasonable for small community oncology practices to be able to meet the standard by recognizing that many of these ACoS sites may not have on-site psychosocial resources. The Alliance urges the inclusion of this new Standard and stands ready to

work with you on its implementation. If you have any questions, please contact Julie Taylor at jtaylor@cancersupportcommunity.org.

Sincerely,

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Psychiatric Association
American Psychosocial Oncology Society
American Psychosomatic Society
American Society for Radiation Oncology
American Society of Clinical Oncology
Association of Pediatric Oncology Social Workers
Association of Oncology Social Work
Bear Necessities Pediatric Cancer Foundation
Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network
Breast Cancer Network of Strength
Cancer Support Community
Candlelighters Childhood Cancer Foundation
Center for Communication in Medicine
Kidney Cancer Association
Susan G. Komen for the Cure
International Psycho-oncology Society
Leukemia and Lymphoma Society
Lung Cancer Alliance
National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship
National Association of Social Workers
National Lung Cancer Partnership
SuperSibs!