By William T.
McGivney, PhD

William T. McGivney, PhD, is the Chief Executive Officer of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network and a recognized expert in coverage policy and drug and device regulatory policy. Before joining the NCCN in 1997, Dr. McGivney directed the Division of Health Care Technology at the American Medical Association and worked for Aetna Health Plans as Vice President for Clinical and Coverage Policy. Awarded the FDA Commissioner's Medal of Appreciation in 1989, Dr. McGivney has served on numerous national boards and committees. He earned his PhD at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and completed a postdoctoral fellowship in the Department of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School.

Notes From the Launch Pad

The National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) is pleased to present the first issue of our official journal, *JNCCN*. One of the interesting tasks of launching a new journal is clarifying what the journal's goals and mission should be. It is important to recognize how that mission fits into and feeds the greater goals of the organization itself. In that context, the goal of *JNCCN* is easy to understand—to address the issues involved in the appropriate management of the broad spectrum of cancers in a way that leads to improved patient care.

To meet that goal, each issue of *JNCCN* will present a selection of the NCCN Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology along with expert reviews and commentary on controversial issues and issues that are important to clinical decision making. *JNCCN* also discusses the practical application of the guidelines and outcomes data in everyday practice. Finally, the journal will publish original research that serves to advance the understanding of disease processes and their diagnosis and treatment.

The decision to create *JNCCN* was made in response to the tremendous success of the NCCN Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology and the continual demand for expanding the discussions of how the guidelines are created and applied. Unlike some guideline efforts across the many fields of medicine, the NCCN guidelines have been widely hailed, used, and accepted as valuable tools because they are delivered in a timely fashion, updated at least annually, and are specific in the recommendations that they include. Furthermore, the NCCN guidelines carefully balance the evaluation of available scientific evidence with the right integration of expert clinical acumen.

JNCCN also will feature the next step in the development of a continuous quality improvement process for cancer care: the implementation of guidelines through performance measurement in the NCCN National Oncology Outcomes Database. The experience, progress, lessons, results, and analysis of this major undertaking can benefit all physicians who seek to improve the practice of oncology, one of the more rapidly advancing fields of medicine. NCCN will present data that address and clarify pressing clinical issues, both from our efforts and from the efforts of other groups in outcomes research.

The NCCN wants this new journal to respond to the needs and interests of clinicians who must make decisions every day for the patient seated across the table. An appropriate response to this need is for the NCCN to provide scientifically valid information to you as reader and clinician, understanding that you will need to make decisions today using your best clinical judgment and with appropriate input from the patient. *JNCCN* will strive to balance your need for real-time information and analysis with the research community's ongoing efforts to answer today's questions and problems with innovative and improved preventive, diagnostic, and therapeutic technologies.

Most importantly, however, NCCN presents *JNCCN* in a spirit of collaboration with you, the reader and our colleague. *JNCCN* is your journal, and we count on you to tell us what you need from it and from the NCCN and to add your commentary, experiences, and ideas.