JNCCN Going Forward

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Are you surprised to find me here? Well, in a way, I’m surprised to find myself here! My career has been blessed with so many wonderful opportunities that I sometimes thought that I already had my quota. Then along came this opportunity to lead JNCCN—Journal of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network, and it was too good to pass up! This was an assignment that I had never tried before with an important journal serving an organization that I had the privilege to help launch. How much better could that be?

Watching NCCN grow and mature has been such a rewarding experience. In 1995, I sat at the table, representing The University of Nebraska Medical Center, and listened to Joe Simone describe a vision for the fledgling NCCN. Although we faltered a bit for a while, our first permanent CEO, Bill McGivney, took us places we never imagined and helped us create a product in the NCCN Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology (NCCN Guidelines) that has become synonymous with quality care around the globe. I’ve been privileged to serve as an NCCN Guidelines Panel Chair from the very beginning, so I was delighted when JNCCN was launched to help disseminate and highlight those guidelines.

Eventually, I relocated to University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) and continued to sit on the NCCN Board until 2005. Meanwhile, NCCN continued to flourish. As with all great organizations, leadership changes occur, and last year, Robert Carlson, MD, my colleague down the road at Stanford Cancer Institute, took the helm as CEO. When I heard the news, I reflected on Bob’s and my early days in the leadership of NCCN. I suspect that he, like me, never imagined then that we’d have these roles today. Bob has a strong vision for NCCN, is committed to evidence-based care, and cares deeply about the success of the journal. It will be a privilege to work with him in this capacity.

As this issue goes to press, we are still discussing ways to shape JNCCN going forward. One thing won’t change. JNCCN will still broadcast changes in the NCCN Guidelines and feature articles that naturally spring from the guidelines process: controversies, dissemination of information about new treatments, streamlining care, cost benefit, and so on. At the upcoming NCCN 19th Annual Conference, I’ll be meeting with our editorial board, many of whom are Guidelines Panel Chairs, to brainstorm about new features that can bring new readers and additional interest to the journal.

In closing, I am deeply grateful to the NCCN Board of Directors for giving me this chance. I am grateful for their confidence in me, for Hal Burstein’s exemplary leadership and example as the previous editor-in-chief, and for another opportunity for me to learn new skills. Life is good!