

## The NCCN 2021 Virtual Congress: Hematologic Malignancies

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The treatment of hematologic malignancies continues to be increasingly complex as a result of the rapid pace and number of advances in understanding the biology and treatment of these disorders. In mid-October, NCCN conducted the NCCN 2021 Virtual Congress: Hematologic Malignancies, a 3-day live virtual congress that addressed the latest in therapeutic advances, updates to the NCCN Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology (NCCN Guidelines), and treatment debates across the broad spectrum of blood cancers. Designed to meet the needs of the full interprofessional care team, including physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses, physician assistants, pharmacists, and other healthcare professionals who manage the care of patients with hematologic malignancies, the congress incorporated interactive polling and moderator-facilitated Q&A sessions.

As with last year, the virtual format provided opportunities for participants to engage with faculty in real time, and also included an online exhibit hall and breakout rooms for networking with colleagues. This special issue of *JNCCN* presents select highlights of the proceedings.

The Virtual Congress was co-chaired by Ranjana H. Advani, MD, Stanford Cancer Institute, and Andrew D. Zelenetz, MD, PhD, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, and included important and timely topics such as “Mutational Landscape in Myeloproliferative Neoplasms: Implications on Prognosis and Clinical Management,” “Optimizing First-Line Therapy for Advanced-Stage Classic Hodgkin Lymphoma,” and “Updates in the Management of Early-Stage Diffuse Large B-Cell Lymphoma.”

Additional sessions focused on updates in the management of relapsed/refractory mantle cell lymphoma, optimizing therapy for relapsed/refractory diffuse large B-cell lymphoma, whether minimal residual disease assessment in chronic lymphocytic leukemia/small lymphocytic lymphoma is ready for routine clinical practice, optimizing treatment approaches for chronic lymphocytic leukemia/small lymphocytic lymphoma, maneuvering the complex web of treatment options for relapsed/refractory multiple myeloma, and how many drugs are enough in newly diagnosed multiple myeloma, among others.

The presentations reviewed here provide essential new information on how to achieve the best outcomes for patients, and also provide a deeper understanding of the strong evidence that supports recommendations found in the NCCN Guidelines. More than 500 attendees participated throughout the live event, and by the end of 2021, all continuing education session recordings will be available through the NCCN Continuing Education Portal at [education.nccn.org/hem2021](https://education.nccn.org/hem2021).

This congress is just one of NCCN’s educational events and programs that have continued despite the pandemic. For more information about educational opportunities, such as the upcoming NCCN 2022 Annual Conference (currently scheduled in a hybrid format) and NCCN content such as the seminal NCCN Guidelines, NCCN Compendia, NCCN Global endeavors, and many other programs, and to watch and participate in NCCN’s continuing education initiatives, visit [NCCN.org](https://nccn.org).



### ROBERT W. CARLSON, MD

Robert W. Carlson, MD, joined NCCN as CEO in January 2013 following an esteemed history of leadership positions within the organization, including Representative to the NCCN Board of Directors, Chair of the Breast Cancer Guidelines Panel, and Member and Founding Chair of the Breast Cancer Risk Reduction Guidelines Panel. Prior to this appointment, he served as Professor of Medicine in the Division of Oncology and Stanford Medical Informatics at Stanford University Medical Center, as well as Medical Director of Inpatient Oncology and Hematology at Stanford Cancer Institute. Dr. Carlson is a graduate of Stanford University Medical School, and he completed his internship and junior residency in internal medicine at Barnes Hospital Group before returning to Stanford University to complete his senior residency. Dr. Carlson is board certified in Medical Oncology and Internal Medicine and is a member of several medical societies. He lectures extensively and has authored or co-authored more than 180 articles, abstracts, and book chapters. From 2001 through 2012, Dr. Carlson was selected by America’s Top Doctors; from 1994 through 2011, he was selected by Best Doctors in America; in 2008, he was presented with the National Physician of the Year Award for Clinical Excellence by Castle Connolly Medical, Ltd.; and in 2010, Dr. Carlson was given the Founding Collaborator Award by the Breast Health Global Initiative (BHGI).

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