

The National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) and our 21 member institutions are dedicated to improving the care available to patients around the world. The NCCN Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology (NCCN Guidelines) and the attendant scientific, evaluative process has become the model for the development and communication of clinical recommendations based on evidence review integrated with expert judgment.

The NCCN is pleased to extend our scientific, clinical collaboration to thought leaders in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). The NCCN–MENA Guidelines Congress held in Abu Dhabi, running from April 23 to 26, 2009, brought together leading clinicians to review the NCCN Guidelines and supporting data and to discuss the applicability of the NCCN Guidelines to patients in this part of our world. As always, the clinical discussion highlighted areas for improvement and clarification in the NCCN Guidelines. As Drs. Azim, Jazieh, and Jahanzeb point out in the accompanying introduction, the work has begun and the initial thinking is published in this “Abu Dhabi Declaration.” Much work remains as experts identify issues for study in trials or through other research methods, issues that relate to possible differences in genetic makeup and its expression, differences in the availability of technology across the 16 countries, and other factors.

The NCCN thanks our colleagues in the Middle East and North Africa for their willingness to share their knowledge, expertise, and experience as we work to improve cancer care for patients whom we serve.



#### William T. McGivney, PhD

William T. McGivney, PhD, is Chief Executive Officer of the NCCN, responsible for the development of strategies and programs to improve the quality of care available to cancer patients. Such programs include the NCCN Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology, NCCN Oncology Outcomes Database, NCCN Oncology Research Program, and NCCN Drugs & Biologics Compendium. Strategically, Dr. McGivney is responsible for the growth of NCCN's influence in the oncology community and for assuring the development of partnerships with managed care companies and employers, the development of NCCN's health information capabilities, and the expansion of centralized research programs.

Before joining NCCN, Dr. McGivney was Director of the Division of Health Care Technology at the American Medical Association and then Vice President for Clinical and Coverage Policy at Aetna Health Plans. While at Aetna, he helped establish the first formal independent outside review process.

Dr. McGivney, a recognized expert in coverage policy and in drug and device regulatory policy, was awarded the FDA Commissioner's Medal of Appreciation in 1989. He has served on numerous national boards and committees including as President of the Board of the Patient Advocate Foundation and National Patient Advocate Foundation and as a member of the UNOS Board of Directors and the Medicare Coverage Advisory Committee.

The ideas and viewpoints expressed in this editorial are those of the author and do not necessarily represent any policy, position, or program of the NCCN.