Introduction to the ASCO Quality Care Symposium

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This special section of *Journal of Oncology Practice* presents major papers from the first ASCO Quality Symposium. The 2-day symposium was held November 30 and December 1, 2012, in San Diego, CA, and attracted over 660 attendees. In the pages of this issue are selected summations of the presentations from the invited speakers as well as distillations by the session chairs of the 15 abstracts selected for oral presentation. The 280 abstracts selected for poster presentations are available on the ASCO University Web site (<http://meetinglibrary.asco.org/abstracts>).

The organizing committee selected abstracts for oral presentation on the basis of their perception of broad interest. Offerings included translational cancer health services research using large databases and population samples, as well as practical interventions that have improved quality in both large cancer care systems and small oncology practices. All of the selections were intended to promote the quality of cancer care for our patients and our colleagues, and were expected to stimulate additional quality improvement projects; research projects; and, above all, improve patient care.

The idea for this meeting began during the year starting in June 2009, during which one of us (D.W.B.) served as ASCO President and another (C.C.E.) was Chair of ASCO's Quality Committee. The theme for that year was "Enhancing Quality through Innovation."¹ Three projects emerged from that year which were designed to improve the provision of quality care to patients with cancer. The first was recognizing and improving quality in real-life practice through the launch of the Quality Oncology Practice Initiative Certification Program. The second project, a rapid learning system to systematize our learning from every patient we treat, has now become the ambitious project CancerLinQ.²

In the third project, ASCO's Board of Directors charged the organizers with developing "a scientific assembly that fosters high quality research interactions and discussion among all investigators involved in quality and outcomes science research as recognized complement to the ASCO Annual Meeting." The result was this Quality Symposium, which aimed to bring together health services researchers (the basic scientists of quality improvement), quality improvement professionals (the translational researchers of quality improvement), and the practitioners of quality improvement.

Early on, we recognized that inclusion of the informed patient is critical to any successful quality improvement effort. We sought and obtained the collaboration of the National Coal-

ition for Cancer Survivorship, a broad-based organization founded in 1986 that advocates for quality cancer care for all people touched by cancer. The Coalition³ is a long-time partner with ASCO's quality improvement efforts and readily agreed to help. Together, we hoped that this meeting would be another of their tools to empower people to advocate for themselves. We also sought and received grant support from the Administration for Healthcare Research and Quality.

Neither the symposium nor this special section would be possible without the hard work of our colleagues on the organizing committee, to whom we extend our heartfelt thanks. We all hope that the contents of this special section will influence the way oncology will be practiced in 5 years, as well as how the next patient for whom you and your clinical colleagues care will be treated.

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3. National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship: <http://www.canceradvocacy.org>