

## **ADCC Criticizes GAO Medicare Payment Report**

*Says report paints a highly distorted picture based on incomplete data; ignores patient outcomes*

March 24, 2015

WASHINGTON, DC – The Alliance of Dedicated Cancer Centers (ADCC), which represents 11 Dedicated Cancer Centers throughout the United States, today issued the following statement from its Executive Director, Don Leedy:

“We are extremely disappointed in the recent Government Accountability Office (GAO) analysis of Dedicated Cancer Center Medicare payments. The report paints a highly distorted picture based on incomplete data and a flawed analysis. It also fails to consider the critically important issue of treatment outcomes as an indicator of effectiveness and efficiency with taxpayer dollars, and should not be used as the foundation for any policy changes.

“Dedicated Cancer Centers exclusively treat cancer and, as such, face unique economic challenges under the Medicare payment system for hospitals. In recognition of those challenges, Congress in 1983 established specific rules governing Medicare payments to Dedicated Cancer Centers. The report does not take into account Congressional intent in establishing those rules.

“The payment protections designed by Congress were intended to ensure that Dedicated Cancer Centers had a viable payment system to treat Medicare patients. Any changes to the way the Dedicated Cancer Centers provide care to Medicare patients should be very carefully considered. Without the protections in place today, ADCC members would face a devastating financial shortfall that could result in unintended, catastrophic consequences for our patients and the war on cancer.

“Further, the report ignores the critically important issue of patient outcomes. Over the course of care for a cancer patient, Medicare payments at Dedicated Cancer Centers are comparable to cancer patients treated at any hospital. However, based on government data, at Dedicated Cancer Centers the likelihood of a patient surviving their cancer after 5 years is 17 percent higher than at other hospitals. This is true across all types of cancer, including the most common cancers – breast, colorectal, lung and prostate.

“The report fails to consider the unique nature of Dedicated Cancer Centers. The 11 Cancer Centers that make up the ADCC are an invaluable national and international resource – advancing the nation’s and the world’s understanding of the causes, prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer and pioneering the precision medicine and other innovative therapies that are making historic progress in beating back this disease.”

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