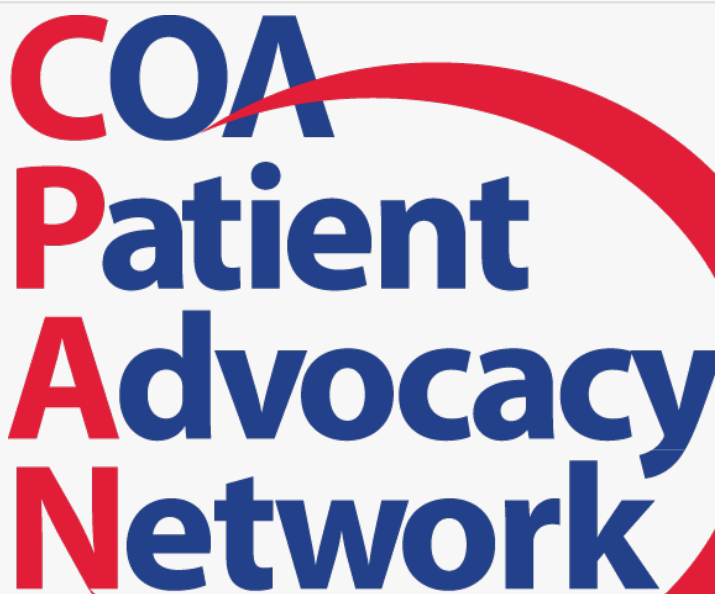


COA Patient Advocacy Network Appoints Medical Co-Chairs

Celebrates 10 Years of Success Advocating for Community Oncology Patients, Professionals, and Practices

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, February 27, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Community Oncology Alliance (COA) Patient Advocacy Network (CPAN) announced the appointment of Lakshmi Aggarwal, MD of Fort Wayne Medical Oncology and Hematology as a new CPAN medical co-chair. She will join Miriam Atkins, MD of Augusta Oncology who will continue serving as CPAN medical co-chair. Dr. Aggarwal has been very involved in CPAN, recently launching a CPAN chapter at her practice, and brings a dedication to advocating for access to local affordable cancer care for every American.



"A cancer diagnosis can be transformative and often motivates patients and survivors to become advocates," said Dr. Aggarwal. "CPAN enables patients with cancer and survivors to share their stories and experiences to highlight the vital importance of community oncology, where more than half of all patients with cancer are treated."

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Our CPAN medical co-chairs, chapter leaders, and advocates are dedicated to ensuring the survival of community oncology”

Rose Gerber, COA

Celebrating 10 years of advocacy in 2019, CPAN was created in recognition of the vital role patients should play in advocating for access to local affordable care for all patients with cancer. CPAN is now a nationally recognized advocacy group for independent, community oncology patients, professionals, and practices, and the only organization representing all members of the cancer community.

In 2018, CPAN collaborated with national cancer organizations and COA partners, participating as speakers and panelists in multiple advocacy events. Additionally, CPAN chapters held almost 60 local community and educational events. In Washington, CPAN brought 70 advocates and 10 pharmacists from 22 practices in 14 states to discuss the importance of community oncology with legislators on Capitol Hill. Local CPAN chapters also participated in national cancer summits and meetings, such as the Biden Cancer Summit. Chapters have also hosted state-level advocacy days, including CPAN's signature "Sit in My Chair", practice visits for policymakers, and successful statehouse meetings. In a year of record-setting growth, CPAN also launched seven new chapters and grew its presence to 23 chapters in practices across the country.

"CPAN complements the work of COA, which has established a record of unprecedented success in mobilizing community oncologists and advocates to raise awareness of the issues facing cancer care delivery," said Michael Diaz, MD, a practicing medical oncologist at Florida Cancer Specialists & Research Institute, outgoing CPAN medical co-chair, and current COA president. "CPAN advocates bring a perspective that makes them invaluable authorities on the quality, accessibility and cost of cancer care."

"Our CPAN medical co-chairs, chapter leaders, and advocates are dedicated to ensuring the survival of community oncology," said Rose Gerber, COA director of patient advocacy and education. "In a brief time, Dr. Aggarwal, in partnership with her CPAN chapter advocacy leader, Lisa Poiry, RN, has established a chapter that is a force within its community."



CPAN has a robust agenda planned for 2019 including the successful advocacy track at the [2019 Community Oncology Conference](#), taking place in Orlando, FL on April 4-5, 2019. Community oncology professionals and advocates from practices across the country will be coming together for two packed days of learning and networking, including a dedicated track for advocacy education and empowerment. Drs. Aggarwal and Atkins will both be presenting at the Conference. CPAN advocates will also be conducting a Hill Day in Washington, DC in the spring, as well as continuing regular local educational events. In June, CPAN will return to the patient advocacy pavilion at the 2019 American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Meeting in Chicago where they will network with other national advocacy organizations.

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About the COA Patient Advocacy Network (CPAN):

The Community Oncology Alliance Patient Advocacy Network (CPAN) was created in recognition of the vital role patients should play in advocating for access to local, affordable cancer care for all. CPAN is a non-cancer type-specific, national network representing patients, cancer survivors, caregivers, family members, medical and oncology professionals, and other advocates. To learn more about CPAN visit www.COAadvocacy.org.

About the Community Oncology Alliance (COA):

The majority of Americans battling cancer receive treatment in the community oncology setting. Keeping patients close to their homes, families, and support networks lessens the impact of this devastating disease. Community oncology practices do this while delivering high-quality, cutting-edge cancer care at a fraction of the cost of the hospital setting. The Community Oncology Alliance (COA) advocates for community oncology and smart public policy that ensures the community cancer care system remains healthy and able to provide all Americans with access to local, quality, affordable cancer care. Learn more at www.CommunityOncology.org.

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