

# U.S. National Representative Update

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## Introduction

By 2030, almost 1 in 5 individuals will be over the age of 65 in the United States representing over 70 million older adults. It is estimated that as a result the cancer incidence rate will increase 45% (with a 67% increase in incidence in individuals over the age of 65). Moreover, the supply of oncologists to provide care to this population will not be sufficient to meet the demand. The burden of cancers diagnosed in older individuals combined with the strains of healthcare system in terms of both financial and human resources require planning, innovation, and active intervention in order to ensure the highest quality cost-efficient care is provided to this population. As a SIOG national representative, this requires being engaged in aspects of training, education, clinical care, research, and leadership.

## Training

UCLA has one of the longest standing integrated geriatric-oncology training programs in the US, with a total of 12 current and past trainees. UCLA offers 1 spot a year for qualified applicants in geriatric-oncology. This year there are four applications for this position. Several prior trainees have received ASCO Young Investigator Awards, and have graduated to academic positions at UCLA and other leading institutions. Dr. Naeim, as the Program Director at UCLA since the creation of this program in 2002, is active on ASCO's Program Directors committee and plays a local and national role in helping to develop innovative approaches for integrating cancer and aging elements into the new Milestones defined by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education.

## Education

Dr. Naeim and his fellows at UCLA are actively involved in providing content as part of the educational modules for geriatric-oncology that are part of ASCO University. Locally, Dr. Naeim and his geriatric fellows provide lectures to primary care providers, geriatricians, and oncologists related to managing older patients with cancer. In addition, numerous local-regional community lectures have been given to educate the lay public in Southern California. Dr. Naeim has participated in key national and international conferences including ASCO, AACR, and SIOG. In 2014, he gave two talks at the 1<sup>st</sup> International Turkish Congress on behalf of SIOG.

## Clinical

Dr. Naeim still runs one of the few general academic geriatric-oncology clinics in the US. This clinic is not tumor specific, and older patients who are pre-frail and frail (usually referred through geriatrics) are seen in this weekly teaching clinic. Bother geriatric-oncology fellows and hematology-oncology fellows rotate through this clinic. The key exclusion to this clinic are patients with acute leukemia and coagulopathy.

## Research

Dr. Naeim has an active research program focused on older cancer patients. Currently, there are two major projects: (a) the Athena Breast Network and (b) Sensing in At-Risk Populations (SARP). The Athena project is focused on risk-stratification of women at the time of breast cancer screening. In addition to being the UCLA site PI for this large multi-institutional study, Dr. Naeim is network lead for the comorbidity and aging core and the patient-centered outcomes workgroup. He will be the network PI for a sub-study that looks defining women who will no longer benefit from screening due to reduce predicted life expectancy and developing communication tools to use with patients and primary care providers. This project recently received a \$15 million dollar pragmatic clinical trial award from the Patient Centered Outcomes Institute. The SARP project focuses on the use of wearable and environmental sensors in assessing and monitoring older patients with and without cancer. This underlying technological approach has been submitted for a provisional patent and the project has been selected by the School of Medicine Accelerator for its innovation and potential for transforming the approach to population-based stratification and management. Two components of this project have and will likely have funding: (a) home assessment and monitoring of older cancer patients (funding for a hematology-oncology project through a ASCO Young Investigator Award, and (b) monitoring transitions of care in at-risk populations through an R01 grant from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality that has been recommended to Council for funding.

## Leadership

In addition the numerous leadership roles that Dr. Naeim has already at UCLA, Dr. Naeim is actively involved in ASCO's GOSIG. He recently also was named Chair of UCLA's Healthcare Innovation Board and will be named health science director of the Center for SMART Healthcare. This provides a platform to discuss aging and cancer themes with a broader range of researchers and industry partners that traditionally have been less exposed to this topic.

**Conclusions: Advancing SIOG's agenda requires a broad set of efforts including training, education, clinical, research, and leadership.**