

# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

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*Sometimes you just can't teach a young dog bad tricks.*

We are approaching the third week of having the new fellows at our institution. There were the expected glitches—eg, their being locked out of the fellows' room—but overall things have been going quite smoothly. One of my goals for the new group, the first under my direct charge, is to make sure our hematology-oncology program lasts a full 3 years. Yes, fellows had previously been here for 3 years, but the third year was not supervised adequately and the performance of the fellows often became a bit questionable. For many, the final year was spent off in the ozone somewhere: studying for boards, moonlighting, watching videos on various diseases, and I have no idea what else.

The new approach is for the fellows who are not going into academics to spend at least 6 months in the clinic and to have the option of doing more, or to spend time in clinical research programs. I decided to take this proactive approach because what usually happens is that, midway through year 3, the fellows realize that they have serious gaps in their knowledge and scurry around to find a clinic that will accept them. Now they will have the opportunity to choose the clinics where they will spend their time. Those fellows going into academics will have milestones to meet so their progress can be monitored.

Friday tends to be a rather slow day in the clinic, especially in the summertime. One of the new fellows was assigned to be at the breast clinic in the morning,

but arrived to find the attending physician away for the day. What happened next reminds me of the old cartoons in which the character with a decision to make has the devil on one shoulder and an angel on the other, both vying to be the one selected. The more senior fellows told him to just blow off the clinic and go home, which is obviously what they had been doing for more than 2 years. However, this diligent fellow found another active clinic and spent the day actually learning. I am proud of him, and hope the firsties can continue to keep the third-year wolves from their door.

Next week, I am off to the Pan Pacific Lymphoma Conference, which is being held on the Kohala Coast of Hawaii. It sounds like it will be splendid, once I get done with the 5 talks and 3 advisory boards I am committed to over a three-and-a-half-day period. Please stop by if you happen to be in the area; it is an excellent meeting and is held in a beautiful setting. To keep me occupied on the plane, I will be reading the most recent issue of *Clinical Advances in Hematology & Oncology*. When you embark on your own vacation this summer, don't forget to take us along.

Until next month...

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bruce D. Cheson". The ink is dark and the signature is written on a light-colored background.

Bruce D. Cheson, MD