When invited to be guest editor of this issue, I was excited to be able to showcase some of the opportunities that are available at referral institutions and in practice. Now, more than ever, veterinary oncologists have the double satisfaction of helping individuals and helping science. Although some view oncology as a “dead end” specialty, those who practice it know that they are making a difference to animals and their owners on a daily basis. Although the recent January 2007 issue of *Veterinary Clinics of North America: Small Animal Practice* was devoted entirely to veterinary communication skills, Laura Garrett and I thought that there are enough communication issues specific to oncology to warrant an article on this topic. As has been so clearly demonstrated in human medicine and is now being documented in veterinary practice, good client communication skills and a trusting client-veterinarian relationship result in better adherence to treatment recommendations, greater client satisfaction, and less professional burnout for the doctor.

Most of this issue is devoted to advances in veterinary oncology. The knowledge base that supports our understanding of cancer is growing, and veterinary medicine is poised to play a key role in the development of better diagnostics and therapeutics. Melissa Paoloni and Chand Khanna explain how veterinary oncology is now giving valuable information back to human oncology in their article entitled “Comparative Oncology Today.” In addition to helping human patients who have cancer, clinical trials that benefit veterinary patients are becoming more and more common. David Vail describes the important mechanics behind the planning and execution of a clinical trial in “Cancer Clinical Trials: Development and Implementation.” Amy LeBlanc and Greg Daniel discuss how diagnostic imaging options are rapidly expanding as radiologists...
are using functional imaging studies not only to stage disease but to monitor response to treatment and adjust therapy as necessary.

Other important areas of state-of-the-art new treatment options are described by Tony Mutsaers, Cheryl London, Tim Fan, Barbara Biller, and Phil Bergman. From new ways to use existing chemotherapy drugs, to using small molecule inhibitors designed to aim at specific targets on or surrounding cancer cells, to immunotherapy and anticancer vaccines, this issue describes the changes that are encompassing medical oncology.

Finally, an exciting cutting-edge radiation therapy modality is described by Jessica Lawrence and Lisa Forrest. Although use of this technology is just gaining popularity in human radiation oncology, we are excited to announce that tomotherapy will be available at the University of Wisconsin–Madison School of Veterinary Medicine starting in 2009.

Thus, although some things in veterinary oncology may never change (like the use of the cyclophosphamide, hydroxydaunorubicin [doxorubicin], Oncovin [vincristine], prednisone protocol for lymphoma), there are many advances happening in veterinary oncology. I hope that this issue makes those changes clear and puts them within the grasp of the practitioner.

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