



2021 AONN+ ANNUAL REPORT • www.AONNOnline.org

ADVANCING ONCOLOGY NAVIGATION AND CARE WITH YOUR SUPPORT

AONN+ would like to thank the following corporate sponsors and industry/alliance partners for their generosity and dedication throughout 2021. Your support was more important than ever this year as we pivoted to serve our mission despite the COVID-19 pandemic. With your ongoing help, we were able to continue improving patient care and quality of life by defining, enhancing, and promoting the role of nurse and patient navigators.

Corporate Sponsors



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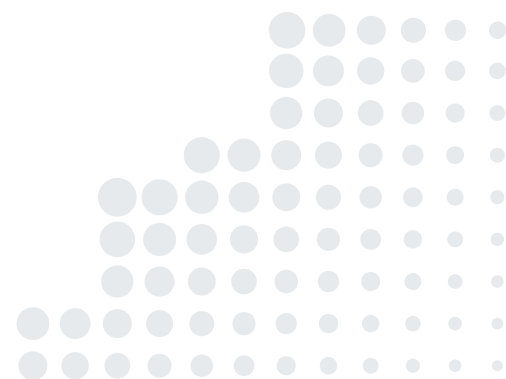


Health System and Alliance Partners



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MESSAGE FROM AONN+ PROGRAM DIRECTOR

“How Firm a Foundation.”

It's a theme that resonated with me often in 2021. Throughout my second year as AONN+'s Program Director, I regularly marveled at the resiliency of our navigators who—despite the challenges of yet another pandemic year—still gave voice to their profession through committees, Local Navigator Networks (LNNs), conference chats, and interaction with advocacy and other professional organizations.

For our part, AONN+'s Leadership Team and Leadership Council continued to guide and direct the organization, drawing on the strategic plans, goals, and objectives we had proposed with administrative support from The Lynx Group.

The Leadership Team, which is comprised of Emily Gentry, BSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, OCN, Senior Director of Education and Program Development, Monica Dean, HON-OPN-CG, Director of Patient Navigation Program Development, and me, supported more than 60 navigation projects. These brought value to AONN+ in the form of educational content, articles, webinars, sponsorship, or other outreach to members. Lisa Hartman, MS, MA, BSEd, BSN, RN, joined us in 2021 as Director of Certification, AONN+ Foundation for Learning, Inc., and strengthened the certification process and presence. Throughout the year, we called on our professional knowledge and understanding of the challenges our members were facing as a result of the pandemic to fulfill the mission, vision, and goals of our organization, as demonstrated in this report.

One highlight of the year was the Leadership Council's release of a business approach for support of AONN+ membership titled “The Need for a Complete Cancer Care Team Is Critical as We Move Out of the Pandemic.” This group also supported the LNNs, committees, projects, and membership in both voice and action. Their 2020 creation of the AONN+ Navigation tab was released in 2021. This online portal provides members or affiliates with the ability to ask AONN+ to approve and circulate information from an institution, publication, or activity pertaining to a navigation or survivorship project. In 2021, the tab allowed 11 projects to go out to membership and capture the navigator's voice through education and the growth of healthcare ventures.

Together, these intricate, interlocking aspects of our organization provided a solid foundation for AONN+ and paved the way for a successful 2021.

A personal vision I had was realized this year with the formal launch of the scholarship fund for members who want to attend the Midyear and Annual conferences. This fund creates a pathway for qualifying AONN+ members to obtain professional education through conference attendance either in person when possible or via the provision of Internet connectivity.

By wisdom an organization is sustained, and the ongoing work of each committee filled the niches of AONN+ with rich knowledge and durable networking. The COVID Toolkit continued to provide navigators with valuable guidance throughout the year, supporting them as professionals on the front lines and as individuals making personal care decisions.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the generous support of our industry sponsors and partners. Your belief in the value of navigation and contributions to our efforts have allowed our navigators to go forth and have influence in the lives of our patients, their families, and communities.

Looking ahead, I am eager to participate in the sustainability and development of this organization in 2022!

Sincerely,



Sharon Gentry, MSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, AOCN, CBCN
Program Director
Academy of Oncology Nurse & Patient Navigators (AONN+)

AONN+ FOUNDATION FOR LEARNING WELCOMES DIRECTOR OF CERTIFICATION

In 2021, AONN+ welcomed Lisa Hartman, MS, MA, BSEd, BSN, RN, to the newly created role of Director of Certification for the Foundation for Learning, Inc. In this role, she will manage accreditation standards for current certifications and lead strategic development for the Foundation for Learning as an organization.

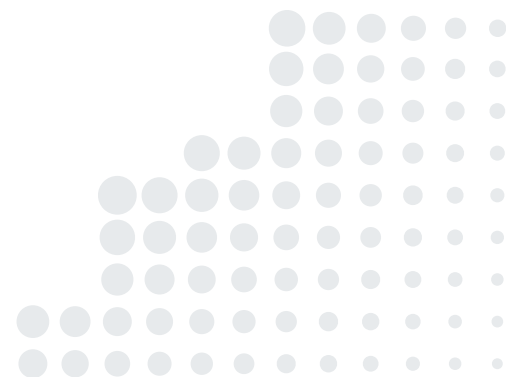
Ms. Hartman comes to AONN+ from Sarah Cannon and HCA, where she was the Director for Oncology Training and Education. In this role, she set and drove training strategy for the entire enterprise, across multiple lines of business and in collaboration with senior leadership and physician leaders. In a previous position with Sarah Cannon, she was Director of Navigation Education, with responsibility for the co-creation of the Sarah Cannon model of navigation and other programmatic foundational materials.

Ms. Hartman holds master's degrees in international business and English, and a bachelor's degree in education, as well as her RN and BSN degrees.

The addition of Ms. Hartman in this role allows Emily Gentry, BSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, OCN, Senior Director of Education and Program Development, and Monica Dean, HON-OPN-CG, Director of Patient Navigation Program Development, to co-direct the organization to enhance recognition of all patient navigators.



**Lisa Hartman, MS, MA,
BSEd, BSN, RN**
Director of Certification
for the Foundation for
Learning, Inc.
Cranbury, NJ



II. MISSION, VISION, AND CORE VALUES

At a Leadership Council Retreat in October 2021 and the AONN+ internal leadership strategy planning meeting, each team reviewed the current Mission, Vision, and Core Values for the organization and agreed they continue to reflect the professionalism of the organization.

»» AONN+ Mission

The mission of AONN+ is to advance the role of patient navigation in cancer care across the care continuum, by providing a network for collaboration, leadership, and development of best practices for the improvement of patient access to care, evidence-based cancer treatment, and quality of life.

»» Vision

The vision of AONN+ is to achieve patient-centered, superior quality cancer care coordination, from pre-diagnosis throughout survivorship or end of life, through effective navigation.

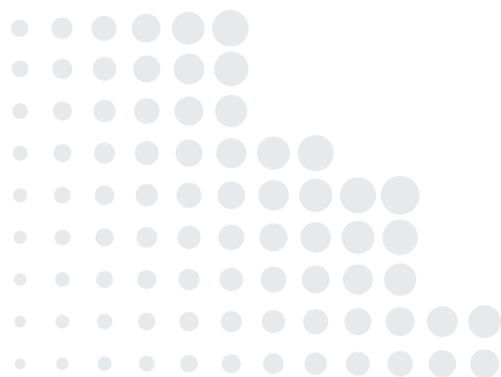
»» Core Values

- Advocacy
- Patient Empowerment
- Team-Based Quality Care
- Innovation
- Professional Development

Advocacy: 2 Levels

1) AONN+ supports patient advocacy by providing navigators with the tools and resources to help navigators ensure better patient care. Resources provided to AONN+ membership give navigators the confidence and ability to adapt new methods into their own practice. They also function as advocates in assuring the patient's life goals are identified and respected by all members of the oncology team (individual navigator "boots-on-the-ground" work).

2) The AONN+ Policy and Advocacy Committee formulates evidence-based public policy positions as they relate to the profession of patient navigation and/or the patients the membership serves (a voice on the national level).



II. MISSION, VISION, AND CORE VALUES

Patient Empowerment

Patient empowerment is a process in which patients understand their role, and are given the knowledge and skills by their healthcare provider to perform a task in an environment that recognizes their community and cultural differences and encourages their participation (World Health Organization definition).

The role of the navigator along the continuum of care is bidimensional in nature with a patient-centered (empowerment with education and knowledge) and health system (multidisciplinary) orientation to deliver timely, seamless care.

One important aspect of navigating is giving your patients the feeling of empowerment. Talk to your patients about having them communicate their preferences and priorities for treatment to their healthcare team and help facilitate shared decision-making in the patient's healthcare. This was critical in 2021 as many patients encountered video visits and newer technology to discuss care.

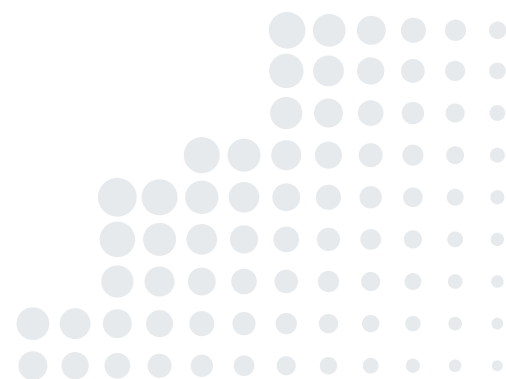
Team-Based Quality Care

Team-based quality care is achieved when oncology specialists and a myriad of other ancillary support staff—all with specific roles and responsibilities—focus on taking care of cancer patients in the best way possible, beginning with awareness and screening in the community setting onto diagnosis, treatment, and finally survivorship or end of life.

Navigators are essential members of the oncology team in providing continuity throughout the cancer continuum to serve as the point person for the patient as well as for the care delivery team. They identify and resolve barriers to the patient's care, as well as promote patient-centered care by discussing and documenting the patient's life goals so that these future patient milestones can be preserved whenever possible. The 2 members of the oncology team who are ever constant are the navigator and the patient. Patient navigation was recognized in 2021 as a solution to health equity issues in cancer care.

Innovation

At each conference, AONN+ provides the latest innovations from exhibitors to aid in providing optimal patient care. Each program, project, or presentation from AONN+ exposes navigators to the latest trends, effective practices, and strategies to better position their program to support patients. The Technology and Innovation Committee continues to focus on the use of technology to capture data/metrics for evaluation, improve quality in navigation, and provide patient education and navigator resources.



III. AONN+ GOALS FOR 2021

Building on lessons learned in 2020, Leadership Council members were highly active throughout the past year—despite the continuing challenges of the pandemic. Whether serving as members of projects or on a national committee, council members remained committed to advancing and achieving AONN+’s goals.

1. Continued Leadership Council Succession and Membership 3-Year Plan

Building on the work begun in 2020, we welcomed **Zarek Mena**, OPN-CG, and **Vikas Mehta**, MD, MPH, FACS, to the Leadership Council this year.

As a strong advocate for patient navigators, Zarek brings multiple years of experience in the field of patient navigation, survivor viewpoints, Local Navigator Network (LNN) leadership, and is a caregiver at heart. She is the Women’s Health Program Manager at Whittingham Cancer Center/MSK Physicians of Norwalk Hospital in Norwalk, CT. In this role, she brings the Commission on Cancer and National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers accreditation standards to the next level. She was instrumental in the creation of the Smilow Family Breast Health Center and MSKCC Physicians affiliation at Whittingham Cancer Center at Nuvance Health, including its numerous support programs. She obtained certifications from the Harold P. Freeman Patient Navigation Institute and AONN+ Foundation for Learning. She also facilitates the Fairfield County Patient Navigation Network, comprised of nurse and nonclinical navigators, and participates in community advocacy efforts, showing her passion to serve the cancer community. Zarek is assisting with the AONN+ LNN Development and Sustainability team, Conference Planning Committee, and other speaking projects.

A navigation champion, Dr. Mehta is a head and neck surgical oncologist and Associate Professor of Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery at Montefiore Medical Center/Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Bronx, NY. He is the Quality Improvement Coordinator for the Montefiore Einstein Cancer Committee. As part of this role, he has been working on developing a robust navigation program using an electronic health record and other database tools to help address cancer care disparities at Montefiore Health System. He is also the Coordinator for Research and Quality for the American Academy of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery, where he helps direct various quality care initiatives that leverage national registry data. Dr. Mehta is an active participant on the AONN+ Technology Innovation Integration to Address Underserved Disparate Patient Populations project.

Leadership Council Composition and Duties

AONN+’s Leadership Council is comprised of:

- AONN+ Program Director
- Council members who represent the membership (administrator, advocacy, nurse navigator, patient navigator, social worker, physician, policy/regulatory, researcher, others)

Each appointed council member will serve for a single, 3-year term. They will be eligible for reappointment to a maximum of 2 terms on the council. In addition, council members will be responsible for developing strategic priorities and participating in the planning and execution of organizational initiatives. They will also take part in the annual evaluation of AONN+ programmatic outcomes.

Other changes to the council in 2021 included the departure of AONN+ Co-Founder **Lillie Shockney**, RN, BS, MAS, HON-ONN-CG, who left to work on the Association of Chronic & Complex Care Nurse Navigators. Ms. Shockney continues involvement with AONN+ as Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Oncology Navigation & Survivorship* and also *CONQUER*, as an advisor for ongoing projects.

As part of the discussion on the Leadership Council succession plan in the presence of the ongoing pandemic, and after reviewing what other national and local organizations have done to “place a hold on 2021,” council members unanimously decided to serve an additional year. This additional volunteered time is a show of commitment that the council gives to AONN+.

III. AONN+ GOALS FOR 2021

AONN+ Leadership Council



Sharon Gentry, MSN, RN,
HON-ONN-CG, AOCN, CBCN



Cheryl Bellomo, MSN,
RN, HON-ONN-CG, OCN



Jennifer Bires, MSW,
LICSW, OSW-C



Linda Burhansstipanov,
DrPH, MSPH



Christian G. Downs,
JD, MHA



Linda Fleisher, PhD, MPH,
HON-OPN-CG



Elizabeth Franklin, PhD,
MSW



Rani Khetarpal, MBA



Jennifer R. Klemp, PhD,
MPH, MA



Vikas Mehta, MD,
MPH, FACS



Zarek Mena, OPN-CG



Mandi Pratt-Chapman,
MA, PhD, HON-OPN-CG

2. Continued Support of Membership via Engagement

Early in the year, the Leadership Council had frank discussions on how the continuing COVID-19 pandemic affected cancer care delivery. This led to the release of a statement outlining reasons to protect cancer care teams with an emphasis on patient navigation. This was shared with membership and other contingencies that surround AONN+.

This was a combined team effort, led by **Christian Downs**, JD, MHA, Executive Director of the Association of Community Cancer Centers, with support from **Linda Fleisher**, PhD, MPH, HON-OPN-CG, Associate Research Professor-Health Disparities & Health Communication at Fox Chase Cancer Center; AONN+ Co-Founder **Lillie Shockney**, RN, BS, MAS, HON-ONN-CG; **Mandi Pratt-Chapman**, MA, PhD, HON-OPN-CG, Associate Center Director of Patient-Centered Initiatives and Health Equity for the George Washington Cancer Center; and **Rani Khetarpal**, MBA, who was serving as Vice President of Provider Partnerships at New Century Health at the time of this work.

The statement urges long-term investments in the cancer delivery infrastructures—as opposed to cuts to address short-term financial stress—and identifies the following in support of its case for protecting the cancer care team:

1. Oncology navigators and social workers will be essential in managing and supporting the influx of newly diagnosed patients—many with advanced disease—resulting from delays in screening and treatment, as well as addressing the social inequities that exist in communities.
2. Navigation and social work will help to enhance revenue by managing costs around no-shows, readmissions, cancellations, and nonadherence to treatment plans, and by addressing bottlenecks in care delivery and efficiency.
3. Reassembling an experienced navigation team following cutbacks is costly and time-consuming.
4. Navigation has been proven to address cancer disparities.

III. AONN+ GOALS FOR 2021

AONN+ Launches Scholarship Fund

Among the highlights of 2021 was the launch of the AONN+ Scholarship Fund, which supports qualifying members who wish to attend the Midyear or Annual conference. The decision was made to extend the scholarship to also cover virtual attendance in light of the continuing pandemic and the need for remote events. Depending on need, scholarship awards can cover:

- Conference registration fee
- Financial assistance with conference travel or media coverage
- Financial assistance with accommodations
- Other expenses

Following the review of applications and selection of awardees, each recipient must commit to demonstrate in writing (within 6 months of the closing conference date) how the conference content will be applied to their navigation role or changes it has inspired them to make in their navigation practice. In addition, recipients must submit a letter from their manager stating that no funds are available from their institution to support their conference attendance.

Special thanks to **Rani Khetarpal**, MBA, **Christian Downs**, JD, MHA, and **Linda Fleisher**, PhD, MPH, HON-OPN-CG, for their work to develop the scholarship process.

AONN+ Scholarship Funding Sources

- Donation to AONN+ Scholarship Fund by any individual
- Donated speaker honorarium
- Bundled donation with membership renewal, conference registration, or other AONN+ registration fees
- Pharmaceutical, technology, or other company/organization

Supporting Local Navigator Networks

Feedback from members of our Local Navigator Networks (LNNs) led to the launch of our LNN Development team. This group, which is comprised of **Rani Khetarpal**, MBA, **Mandi Pratt-Chapman**, MA, PhD, HON-OPN-CG, and **Zarek Mena**, OPN-CG, worked together to create an LNN Welcome/Orientation booklet for new LNN leaders to help sustainability and development of the networks. It was completed by the end of the year and will be distributed to all LNN leaders early in 2022.

In 2021, AONN+ grew to more than

9,000
members strong

3. Increase Overall Membership by December

In 2021, AONN+ incorporated a new internal monthly tracking system to analyze new memberships, conference attendee memberships, and trial membership conversions. *We're pleased that AONN+ experienced a 14.2% increase in memberships from 2020 to 2021.*

Another goal was to enhance Leadership Council engagement and collaboration. Despite Zoom fatigue, we had greater than 70% council member participation at each bimonthly call in 2021. Many members of the council presented at a Midyear or Annual conference session, contributed to a Facebook Live presentation, or shared their expertise in a podcast. And all participated in the annual "Leadership Live" town hall at the 2021 Annual Conference.

On the topic of leadership, we are always looking for oncology navigators who could serve the organization in a greater capacity. Throughout the year, we monitored communications with AONN+, including conference chats, e-mail inquiries, membership lists and surveys, academy and national networking events, and LinkedIn, to identify possible candidates for leadership roles.

The creativity to not limit just to in-person conference needs was reflected as the 2021 Midyear Conference went virtual - 4 people received registration, 3 internet access and 2 travel to get internet access. All received a free year's membership to AONN+. This was a reflection of the digital access barriers members face in their communities.

III. AONN+ GOALS FOR 2021

4. Maintain and Advance Certification

In 2021, national accreditation with the ANSI National Accreditation Board (ANAB) ISO/IEC 17024 was maintained, and annual assessment completed. ANAB assessors noted and applauded a great increase in program sophistication since initial accreditation.

As noted earlier (see page 5), **Lisa Hartman**, MS, MA, BSEd, BSN, RN, joined AONN+ in 2021 to serve as Director of Certification. Her expertise and specialized knowledge allow for continued program growth and a focus on certification excellence. In addition, the internal support of **Rachael Baranoski**, Director, Associations Project Management, and her team was invaluable. Continued growth of the certification program remains a priority, and a new role of Senior Manager of Certification was created and posted in 2021. This role will remove most certification-related duties from the Project Management team and allow for greater enhancement of internal policies and processes.

AONN+ FFL Certification Eligible for Magnet

AONN+ Foundation for Learning (FFL) achieved a major milestone when it announced in late 2021 that it was able to gain Magnet recognition of ANAB ISO/IEC 17024 as an approved accrediting body. This now means that the Oncology Nurse Navigator–Certified Generalist (ONN-CG) certification is approved for those institutions obtaining or maintaining Magnet recognition. Furthermore, any additional nursing certifications AONN+ FFL should accredit through ANAB ISO/IEC 17024 will be immediately usable for Magnet programs.

The ANCC's Magnet Recognition Program distinguishes organizations that meet rigorous standards and is considered the highest recognition for nursing excellence. *U.S. News & World Report's* annual showcase of "America's Best Hospitals" includes Magnet recognition in its ranking criteria for the quality of inpatient care.

Certification Study Enhancements Introduced

In response to member feedback, we were happy to introduce the *ONN-CG Preparation Guide* and *OPN-CG Preparation Guide* during the 2021 Annual Conference. These guides were designed by AONN+ FFL to provide the applicant with foundational concepts and assist in the creation of a personalized study plan/strategy. The release of these guides was met with member appreciation and approval. A subsequent member request—a certification practice exam—was noted and added to the 2022 strategy.

Regional Certifications in 2021

June 2021 Regional Sites: Edison, NJ; Baltimore, MD; Lexington, KY; Orlando, FL

August 2021 Regional Sites: Jacksonville, FL; Greenville, SC

December 2021 Regional Sites: Edison, NJ; Houston, TX; Chicago, IL; Miami, FL; Knoxville, TN

2021 TOTALS:

 **41** new OPN-CG certifications awarded

 **65** new ONN-CG certifications awarded

 **11** OPN-CG Renewals

 **66** ONN-CG Renewals

III. AONN+ GOALS FOR 2021

5. Mature and Retain Active Local Navigator Networks

Local Navigator Networks (LNNs) play an important role in AONN+'s overall strategy. By facilitating communication and education among peers, they serve to support and advance navigators at all stages of their career.

In 2021, AONN+ was pleased to add 4 new LNNs to the fold, bringing the total number to 35. These include:

- National Breast Cancer Foundation Virtual LNN
- Northwest LNN (Portland, Oregon)
- Southeast Louisiana
- Indigenous Peoples Navigation Network (IPNN)

In addition, we are pleased to share that instead of being inactivated, Colorado LNN was revitalized by the work of the Colorado Cancer Coalition.

Enhancing the development and sustainability of the LNNs was also supported by the initiation of quarterly LNN leadership calls, the finalized LNN Welcome/Orientation booklet that implemented the 2019 LNN survey findings, and the promotion of virtual LNNs in response to the pandemic. The quarterly newsletter to LNN leaders continued, and many shared the information using Facebook and other digital communication tools. The Speakers Bureau, which was piloted in 2020 and formally launched in 2021, continued for LNNs across the United States and many regional sites that do not support an LNN. In partnership with Abbott, Astellas, AstraZeneca, Bristol Myers Squibb, Bayer, Taiho, and Lilly Oncology, we were thrilled to offer more than 75 virtual speaker bureau programs to update and educate our navigators on the latest products, disease states, and therapies on the market. Please see page 30 to learn more about our work with the LNNs in 2021.

6. Increase AONN+ Midyear and National Conference Attendance

The continued challenges of COVID-19 led AONN+ to pivot, once again, to a virtual platform for both our Midyear and Annual conferences in 2021. This decision was made at the request of our members, who, through a survey, expressed their preference for a remote event.

This move proved beneficial for both AONN+ and our membership. The Midyear Conference experienced a 15% increase in attendance, while the Annual Conference experienced a 21% increase.

We also introduced a tiered pricing structure for the conferences this year to entice—and incentivize—our audience to sign up early. This allowed us to meet and surpass annual benchmarks for registration. These cost-savings opportunities replaced the usual promotions surrounding holidays, such as St. Patrick's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, and so on. Historically, we have received complaints from those who register early, saying they miss out on sales by being diligent and proactive.

In addition, we tied the tiered pricing to an ambitious 12-month membership campaign. We saw increased membership signups in January and February 2021, so that the new members could take advantage of the tier 1 pricing for members.

As mentioned earlier in this report, members experiencing financial hardship were also encouraged to sign up for assistance with conference expenses through the new Scholarship Fund, developed by our Leadership Council at the beginning of the year.

These changes and opportunities, as well as the vast educational benefits offered through conference attendance, were promoted to current and prospective members through a multichannel media campaign that included:

- E-mail marketing
- Social media marketing
- Print ads
- Press releases (particularly surrounding transforming the live events to virtual formats)

Post-event content, such as the Conference Highlights, helped to reinforce the value of attendance.

III. AONN+ GOALS FOR 2021

Each year, we strive to empower our attendees with real-world and current information that they can use in their own practices. At both events, nationally recognized faculty delved into pressing topics in navigation and healthcare, including racial disparities. We were proud to present research findings from the 5-year national study, “**Accountability for Cancer Care through Undoing Racism and Equity (ACCURE)**,” which was funded by the National Cancer Institute and led as a collaborative effort among the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, The Partnership Project, Inc., Cone Health, and the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. In a session titled “Technology Innovation Integration to Address Underserved Disparate Patient Populations,” the research team shared how we can minimize, and hopefully eliminate, racial disparities in the completion of recommended treatments for breast and lung cancers. This may be done by combining feedback and navigation with the use of a real-time registry.

One thing that sets AONN+ apart is that we provide attendees with the opportunity to access and reinforce the knowledge offered at our conferences for 1 year after the fact. This is a free option for conference attendees, while those who could not attend can access sessions online for a modest charge. In addition, the AONN+ Leadership team continues to develop a post-conference resource guide that captures resources shared by attendees—this is e-mailed to attendees after the conference.

For more information on our Midyear and Annual conferences, see pages 23 and 24.

2021 AONN+ MIDYEAR CONFERENCE

increased by **15%** 

24.2% NEW AONN+ MEMBERS

Offered up to

24.5 total CE hours
(including enduring materials)

Tiered Pricing

AONN+ Member	Nonmember
\$79.99 Valid until August 31, 2021	\$99.99 Valid until August 31, 2021
\$115 September 1 - October 31	\$145 September 1 - October 31
\$145 Full Price	\$165 Full Price

2021 AONN+ ANNUAL CONFERENCE

increased by **21%** 

26.4% NEW AONN+ MEMBERS

Offered up to

34 total CE hours
(including enduring materials)

Tiered Pricing

AONN+ Member	Nonmember
\$250 Valid until August 31, 2021	\$375 Valid until August 31, 2021
\$300 September 1 - October 31	\$425 September 1 - October 31
\$350 Full Price	\$475 Full Price

III. AONN+ GOALS FOR 2021

7. Formalize and Standardize Committee Operations

Succession planning and collaboration were 2 priorities for the national committees in 2021. At present, each committee is assessing its respective leadership needs, identifying future leaders, and providing mentorship for these individuals where possible. One example of this is the Conference Committee. After years of service, **Penny Daugherty**, RN, MS, OCN, ONN-CG, and **Peg Rummel**, RN, MHA, OCN, NE-BC, HON-ONN-CG, will transition their co-leader roles to **Kristina Rua**, MSN, RN, OCN, ONN-CG, and **Clara Lambert**, BBA, OPN-CG, in 2022. This succession will be guided by a formal mentoring plan to create a smooth transition in leadership.

The need to establish an integrative health national committee was voiced by AONN+ members and knowledgeable navigation professionals and was validated by survey questions submitted to the broader membership. This led to the founding of the Integrative Health versus Medicine Committee.

Throughout the year, the committees also identified many ways in which they could collaborate. The Technology and Innovation Committee, for example, kicked off the year by partnering with the Metrics and Survivorship Committee to host focus groups where membership could discuss their professional needs. This has expanded into new initiatives that will be explored in 2022.

8. Increase and Enhance CE Offering with 20 Credits by December 2021

AONN+'s goal in offering continuing education credits is to ensure that oncology nurse and patient navigators maintain and improve their skills and absorb new information that will allow them to better support patients. Our CE courses are a topmost request from AONN+ members, and they build navigator confidence and expertise in their profession. Request for CE education continues to be a top priority as confirmed in our AONN+ Member Survey.

Members can earn CEs through live and on-demand conferences, member-exclusive webinars, and monographs and articles published in the *Journal of Oncology Navigation & Survivorship (JONS)*.

AONN+ awarded more than
25.5 CE credits
 during the first half of 2021
 to more than
8,900
 healthcare professionals.

2021 AONN+ CE Update

Over 9,000 members

AONN+ 2021 Midyear Virtual Live **16.5**

AONN+ 2021 Annual Virtual Live **18.0**

2021 Conferences: **34.5**

AONN+ 2021 Virtual Conference Archives **51.0**

Partnership Links Out (I.E. Dandelion, RN, LBBC) **3.5**

CE Articles 2021 **10.0**

CE Webinars 2021 **14.5**

2021 AONN+ CE: **79.0**

AONNOnline.org/education

- Financial Navigation
- Self-Compassion and Resiliency
- Helping Your Patients Manage Survivorship
- CAR-T Webinar
- Precision Medicine
- Aftermath of COVID

III. AONN+ GOALS FOR 2021

9. Increase Original Research Submissions to *JONS*

AONN+ is working diligently to create a culture where navigators are committed to growing professionally by publishing original research. One way in which we do this is by encouraging all abstract authors to submit their original research for publication in the *Journal of Oncology Navigation & Survivorship (JONS)*. To increase the rigor of research article review and satisfy members' requests for CE opportunities, each submitted article was reviewed by the *JONS* Editorial Director and then placed through the accreditation process.

In addition, webinar education offered in the fall, titled "Taking the Mystery Out of Original Research: Learn How to Execute Your Ideas," taught navigators how to identify their research question and how to initiate their research process.

The "Heart of a Researcher" podcast, which aired in December, provided mentorship insights to navigators on developing their own professional development in the area of research. Led by **Lisa Hartman**, Director of Certification, AONN+ Foundation for Learning, Inc., and featuring **Linda Burhansstipanov**, MSPH, DrPH, and **Linda Fleisher**, PhD, MPH, HON-OPN-CG, this podcast explored grant writing and pursuing evidence-based research necessary for successful applications to funders.

10. Maintain Existing Partnerships in 2021 and Add New Ones in 2022

Partnerships with like-minded organizations are vital to AONN+'s mission and vision. We enjoy lasting relationships with many prominent organizations, and are actively working to identify and promote the value-add of these partnerships and collaborations. Our hope is that this will lead to future partnerships and collaborations. Learn more about our partnerships on page 21.

Current 2021 Partnerships

Agreements include:

Sarah Cannon

Ulman Foundation

Midwest Cancer Alliance (MCA)

Living Beyond Breast Cancer

Collaboration and projects with:

FORCE

ACCC

Community Support Community

ACS Beacon

Leukemia & Lymphoma Society-FB Live

National Navigation Roundtable

IV. KEY AONN+ INITIATIVES

AONN+ Metrics Committee Continues to Explore Opportunities to Implement Metrics Toolkit

In February, AONN+ and the Alliance to Advance Patient-Centered Cancer Care presented a webinar titled “Evaluating the Sustainability of Oncology Navigation with the Navigation Metrics Toolkit.” Navigation experts **Monica Dean**, HON-OPN-CG, Director of Patient Navigation Program Development at AONN+; **Tricia Strusowski**, RN, MS, Chair, AONN+ Metrics Committee; and **Danelle Johnston**, MSN, RN, OCN, HON-ONN-CG, Senior Vice President of Mission Delivery at Cancer Support Community, led an in-depth discussion on the implementation and value of the toolkit.

The AONN+ Navigation Metrics Toolkit was launched in 2020. The new resource provides navigators with guidance on how to select, implement, report, and use navigation metrics to help improve patient care and foster navigation program development and growth.

It is the result of an extensive 3-year project, conducted in collaboration with the American Cancer Society, that focused on researching and designing the AONN+ Evidence-Based Navigation Metrics, a national standardized tool for measuring the elements crucial to coordinating high-quality, team-based care and demonstrating the success and sustainability of navigation programs. The toolkit will help navigators, executives, and administrators understand, support, and track vital metrics, such as patient experience, clinical outcomes, and return on investment.

“This method of navigation validation is critical to this growing group of diverse professionals and instrumental in moving forward the profession of patient navigation,” says **Sharon Gentry**, MSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, AOCN, CBCN, Program Director, AONN+.

The webinar also demonstrated that active participation in data collection, analytics, and reporting outcomes are not added responsibilities for oncology navigators but integrated into the role.

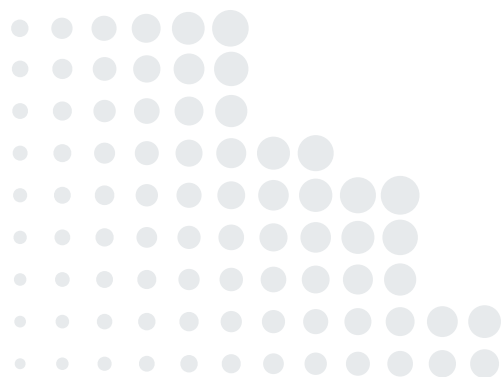
Task Force Establishes New Practice Standards for Professional Navigators

The Professional Oncology Navigation Task Force has created a new set of practice standards for professional clinical and patient oncology navigators. It includes knowledge- and skill-based criteria for delivering competent and ethical services to those impacted by cancer.

These new standards also provide benchmarks for healthcare employers and information for policy makers and decision makers, as well as the public, that is vital to fully understanding the role of professional oncology navigators.

Applications may vary by setting. To find the most appropriate one, a navigator should review the task force’s standards in their entirety and cross-reference them with the relevant professional guidance.

The professional organizations responsible for the creation of the Oncology Navigation Standards for Professional Practice include AONN+, Association of Oncology Social Work, Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses, and Oncology Nursing Society. Patient organizations involved in developing this document include the Cancer Support Community and the Smith Center for Healing and the Arts. The foundational steps taken by the Biden Cancer Initiative Working Group on Patient Navigation also led to the creation of this document. We would like to thank all individuals and organizations who reviewed and commented on this document.



IV. KEY AONN+ INITIATIVES

New Advances in Development of Navigation-Specific Acuity Tool

Since 2018, AONN+ has been collaborating with Astellas to develop, standardize, and validate an evidence-based, oncology acuity tool. When complete, this tool will help oncology navigators characterize the intensity of patient navigation workload, aid in the allocation of navigation resources, and measure the effectiveness of navigation on patient outcomes.

To identify existing evidence from a navigation standpoint, team members conducted an intensive literature review of oncology publications from the past 10 years. Based on their findings, published in the *Journal of Oncology Navigation & Survivorship* in July 2019, the team determined that there was a need for additional research to better understand how oncology navigation acuity is defined and determined.

The team also continues to examine common barrier categories and discuss possibilities for weighing specific barriers for acuity measurement.

In 2021, more than 70 oncology navigators provided valuable insight through virtual focus groups into the design and function of the acuity tool. The abstract and poster from a complementary scoping review were presented at the 2021 AONN+ Annual Conference. The objective of this review was to investigate and analyze articles related to the components of the acuity tool, including age, race, ethnicity, diagnosis and stage, barriers, and treatment per NCCN guidelines or other national standards published between January 1, 2018, and April 1, 2021.

The scoping review's findings will be used to inform evidence-based oncology case studies, which will comprise part of a feasibility study for the acuity tool.

AONN+ BRIDGE Initiative Is Creating a Roadmap for a Rapidly Evolving Field

The Building Relationships in Delivering Genetic/Genomic Education (BRIDGE) initiative was formed in response to AONN+ membership-identified needs and the integral role that somatic and germline testing plays in the management of individuals across the cancer care continuum.

Educational interventions are used to connect oncology nurse and patient navigators to cancer genetics/genomics professionals, ensuring patients have access to the most current emerging technologies that may directly impact the level of care received, as well as quality of life.

In a virtual preconference workshop in 2020, a multidisciplinary faculty comprised of genetics nurses, advanced practice nurses, certified genetic counselors, and researchers discussed 2 emerging genomics technologies that may soon impact cancer treatment and management. The panel also proposed a new position, a "genetic extender" for navigators. The genetic extender would help facilitate the gathering of a relevant family history, assemblage of a multidisciplinary team, and evaluating of educational resources, among other responsibilities.

The AONN+ BRIDGE program is also spearheading a Precision Medicine Toolkit that would ultimately assist healthcare providers who manage and/or navigate patients in such a setting. The expanding role of oncology navigation requires enhanced knowledge and competency to meet the growing demands of incorporating personalized medicine into practice. The toolkit, which will incorporate evidence-based practices to meet national accreditation standards and best practices, is being designed to comprehensively address those quickly evolving needs.



IV. KEY AONN+ INITIATIVES

A Year of Extensive Expansion for CAPE

A presentation at the AONN+ Annual Conference in 2021 introducing the Cancer Advocacy & Patient Education (CAPE) program, a recently created AONN+ initiative, drew an enthusiastic reception. CAPE is a patient-centered digital education portal designed to provide patients with cancer access to information and support materials appropriate to their disease state and stage. The goal is to improve their experience through their cancer trajectory with personalized education. The past year was notable on a few other fronts for the initiative. First, work on the CAPE Lung Cancer program began. **Cheryl Bellomo**, MSN, RN, OCN, ONN-CG and Amy Jo Pixley, MSN, RN, OCN, ONN-CG sharing their expertise and passion for individualized patient education in lung cancer led this program development.

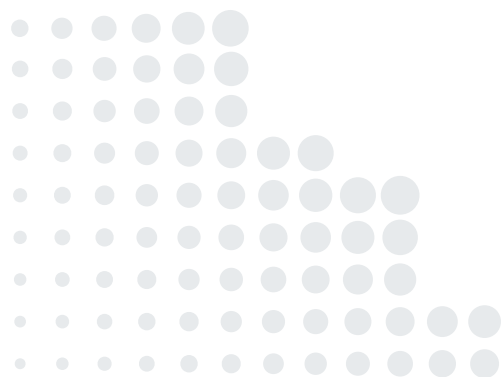
To develop this library, AONN+ partnered with Takeda Oncology and a multistakeholder coalition of leading patient advocacy organizations for lung cancer. Based on the identified areas of concern, 7 integrative educational modules were outlined, and current best-practice resources and tools were gathered for each.

They include:

1. *Understanding Your Diagnosis*
2. *Treatment and Clinical Trials*
3. *Self-Care*
4. *Coping*
5. *Shared Decision-Making*
6. *Financial*
7. *Caregiver and Family Role*

Also in 2021, a platform for the Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia CAPE program was developed, along with educational modules, with the support of **Nikki Barkett**, BSN, RN, OCN, and **Chelsea Passwater**, DNP, APRN, AGCNS-BC, OCN.

Distribution among AONN+ members is expected to occur in the spring. The CAPE CLL program is supported by funding from Pharmacyclics, an AbbVie company, and Janssen Biotech, Inc. And a third program, Renal-Cell Carcinoma CAPE, was launched in 2021 with the support of Exelixis, Inc. Marco Carlos, MA, OPN-CG, and Cathy Meade, CNIV, BSN, RN, OCN, are providing the clinical leadership. The program is expected to be brought to fruition later this year.



V. ADVANCING CHANGE THROUGH NATIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Gentry Appointed to New Role with the Commission on Cancer

AONN+ Program Director **Sharon Gentry**, MSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, AOCN, CBCN, replaced AONN+ Co-Founder **Lillie Shockney**, RN, BS, MAS, HON-ONN-CG, whose term expired in 2021, as the AONN+ representative for the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer (CoC), a consortium of professional organizations dedicated to improving survival and quality of life for cancer patients through standard setting.

Gentry's 3-year term will run through October 2024. Upon her acceptance, she was appointed to the CoC's accreditation committee, which provides direction for the commission's accreditation program, including implementing and evaluating CoC standards, overseeing and evaluating survey and review processes and results, and promoting accredited cancer programs.

In October, Gentry delivered a formal presentation about AONN+ to CoC members, highlighting the aspects of the 2 organizations' missions that parallel each other.

Shaping a More Equitable Direction to Lung Cancer Care

Each year, the National Lung Cancer Roundtable (NLCRT) membership, a nationwide coalition of more than 160 professional and national societies, cancer centers, government agencies, research groups, advocacy and policy organizations, and corporate associates, convenes to work together on its shared goal to create lung cancer survivors.

Monica Dean, HON-ONN-CG, AONN+ Director of Patient Navigation Program Development, represents the Academy on both the roundtable and its Eliminating Lung Cancer Stigma Task Group.

In 2021, the NLCRT had a singular focus: shaping a more equitable direction to lung cancer care and control in areas such as risk reduction, early detection, tobacco prevention and treatment, diagnosis and therapy, survivorship, and policy. At its annual conference in December, keynote speakers addressed the determinants of minority health and cancer-related health disparities to advance health equity across the lung cancer continuum.

New Navigation Toolkit Aims to Support Low- to Middle-Income Stakeholders

The ACS BEACON (Building Expertise, Advocacy, and Capacity for Oncology Navigation) Initiative Global Patient Navigation Toolkit and Peer Learning Collaborative was completed in 2021. This is a dynamic and self-service toolkit that is designed to help healthcare institutions and cancer organizations in low- to middle-income countries interested in providing more patient-centered care to build and deliver programs suited to their local context by using available resources. AONN+ members contributed input and support for the initiative. The collaborative, as well as virtual mentoring and support, are currently available. Programs are expected to launch later this year.

Increasing Access to Credible Breast Cancer Information, News, and Research

Launched in late 2019, the nonprofit organization Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered (FORCE) worked closely with its key stakeholder partners to develop a needs assessment survey for oncology nurse navigators working with breast cancer patients. AONN+—represented by Leadership Council and Advisory Board Member **Jennifer Klemp**, PhD, MPH, MA—along with Susan G. Komen and researchers at the University of South Florida had input in the development of this survey. Responses will help FORCE and its partners develop continuing education modules to meet the needs of breast cancer navigators.

In addition, **Sharon Gentry**, MSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, AOCN, CBCN, AONN+ Program Director, serves as a member of FORCE's XRAY Steering Committee. Project "eXamining the Relevance of Articles for You" (XRAY) was developed in response to the need for a reliable source of breast cancer information in news headlines. With funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the group has developed a program to review breast cancer topics reported in the media.

V. ADVANCING CHANGE THROUGH NATIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Maintaining an Active Role in Navigation Policy and Advocacy

AONN+'s work with the Cancer Leadership Council continued throughout 2021. Serving as the council's AONN+ representative, **Sharon Gentry**, MSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, AOCN, CBCN, worked to bring the navigation perspective to advocacy discussions. Her efforts are supported by the work of AONN+'s Policy and Advocacy Committee, which is chaired by **Jamie Callahan**, BSN-RN, OCN, CBCN.

AONN+ is a leader in the education of navigators and is not only empowering members with the knowledge needed for their day-to-day role, but also to serve as the voice of their patient and profession—locally and nationally.

While there's little question that much of the Policy and Advocacy Committee's attention continued to be consumed by COVID-19 policy this past year, members did manage to weigh in on other pressing legislative issues. Letters signed by AONN+ in 2021 include the following:

- **January 27, 2021** – Letter to Jose Romero, MD, Chair of the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, regarding people with a history of cancer among those with high-risk medical conditions in the scheduling of COVID-19 vaccinations.
- **February 5, 2021** – Letter to Xavier Becerra, Secretary-Designate of the Department of Health and Human Services, to express opposition to certain new flexibilities that are being provided to Part D sponsors participating in the Medicare Part D Payment Modernization Model for 2022.
- **March 4, 2021** – Letter to Jose Romero, MD, to offer AONN+'s perspective on progress in the COVID-19 vaccination of cancer patients and others with serious health conditions, and to recommend actions that could be taken to accelerate the vaccination of cancer survivors, who are at risk of poor outcomes from COVID-19.
- **March 16, 2021** – Letter to Representatives Terri Sewell, Jodey Arrington, Raul Ruiz, and Richard Hudson, and Senators Mike Crapo, Michael Bennet, Ben Cardin, and Tim Scott to highlight the barriers to coverage of multicancer early detection tests for Medicare beneficiaries.
- **May 18, 2021** – AONN+ pledges its support for the Reducing Hereditary Cancer Act of 2021, legislation that would ensure Medicare beneficiary access to genetic testing for cancer risk, increased screening, and risk-reducing interventions, when medically necessary and appropriate.
- **August 6, 2021** – The AONN+ Policy and Advocacy Committee unites with more than 2 dozen patient groups and healthcare partners that are joining forces to call for a comprehensive paid family and medical leave program, including caregiving leave, to be included in the proposed human infrastructure package.
- **August 23, 2021** – AONN+ joins more than 20 professional and advocacy organizations in a letter penned to the Honorable Diana DeGette and the Honorable Fred Upton in support of newly proposed language in Title II, Section 204, Patient Experience Data (PED), Subsection (b), Collection, Submission, and Use of Data that emphasizes the importance of patient experience data.
- **September 17, 2021** – AONN+ joins numerous patient care organizations, as part of the Cancer Leadership Council, in urging the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to exercise caution in making changes to payment policies during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **November 30, 2021** – AONN+ joins many organizations in writing to Congress and urging the passage of the DIVERSE Trials Act, a bipartisan bill that will help ensure more patients—regardless of their race, economic means, or geographic location—have a chance to enroll in clinical trials.
- **December 8, 2021** – AONN+ signs a letter in support of other advocacy organizations urging congressional leaders to pass legislation to prevent massive Medicare payment cuts to radiation oncology.
- **December 9, 2021** – AONN+ joins the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society and other cancer patient community organizations in supporting increased access to time-sensitive care for children via the bipartisan Accelerating Kids' Access to Care Act.

VI. AMPLIFYING AONN+'S MISSION THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS



Sarah Cannon

We marked the third year of our National Healthcare System Alliance Partnership with Sarah Cannon in 2021. This year we had 136 Sarah Cannon oncology navigators take advantage of the special AONN+ membership program offered to them through this partnership. In addition, Sarah Cannon provided navigation-specific continuing education content in the *Journal of Oncology Navigation & Survivorship*, through AONN+ webinars, and at AONN+'s Midyear and Annual conferences, where it also participated as an exhibitor. Many of its members also participated on both AONN+ and AONN+ Foundation for Learning committees.

Together, AONN+ and Sarah Cannon also collaborated on 2 CE offerings. The first, presented by **Clara Lambert**, BBA, OPN-CG, focused on Financial Navigation. The second, presented by **Mary Buffington**, MSN, RN, OCN, ONN-CG, and **Emily Gentry**, BSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, OCN, focused on Self-Compassion and Resiliency.



**Masonic Cancer Alliance
(formerly Midwest Cancer Alliance)**

Our Alliance Partnership with Masonic Cancer Alliance (MCA) is now in its third year. The outreach network of the University of Kansas Cancer Center, MCA collaborated with AONN+ to provide membership benefits and resources to their navigation community as well as coordinated a webinar on Financial Navigation in October 2021.



A valuable Alliance Partner, the Ulman Foundation supports AONN+'s efforts through its unique focus on adolescent and young adult navigation. In 2021, the Ulman Foundation presented sessions at both the Midyear and Annual conferences, a "Heart and Soul of Oncology Navigation" podcast, and several webinars. In addition, several of its members enjoy AONN+ membership and participate on our national committees.

CE OFFERINGS

October: "The Aftermath of COVID-19"

Presented by Megan Solinger, MHS, MA, and Taylor Hosier, MHA

January: "Sex and Intimacy"

Presented by Megan Cannone, LCSW, Devon Ciampa, LMSW, and Judy Davis

2021 AONN+ CONFERENCE SPEAKING OPPORTUNITIES:

Midyear Conference - Preconference Workshop |
The Nuts & Bolts of Building a Navigation Program
Megan Solinger, MHS, MA

Annual Conference - Breakout Session |
Fertility (offered on Friday and Saturday)
Megan Solinger, MHS, MA



**LIVING BEYOND
BREAST CANCER®**

Living Beyond Breast Cancer (LBBC)

"Heart and Soul of Navigation" podcast: "Young Women with Breast Cancer: Needs and Opportunities," moderated by AONN+'s **Emily Gentry**, BSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, OCN, Senior Director of Education, and featuring Janine Guglielmino, VP, Mission Delivery of LBBC, and Jasmine Sowers, Co-Founder and Chief Visionary Officer for The Breast of Us

Additional blog and social media exchanges:

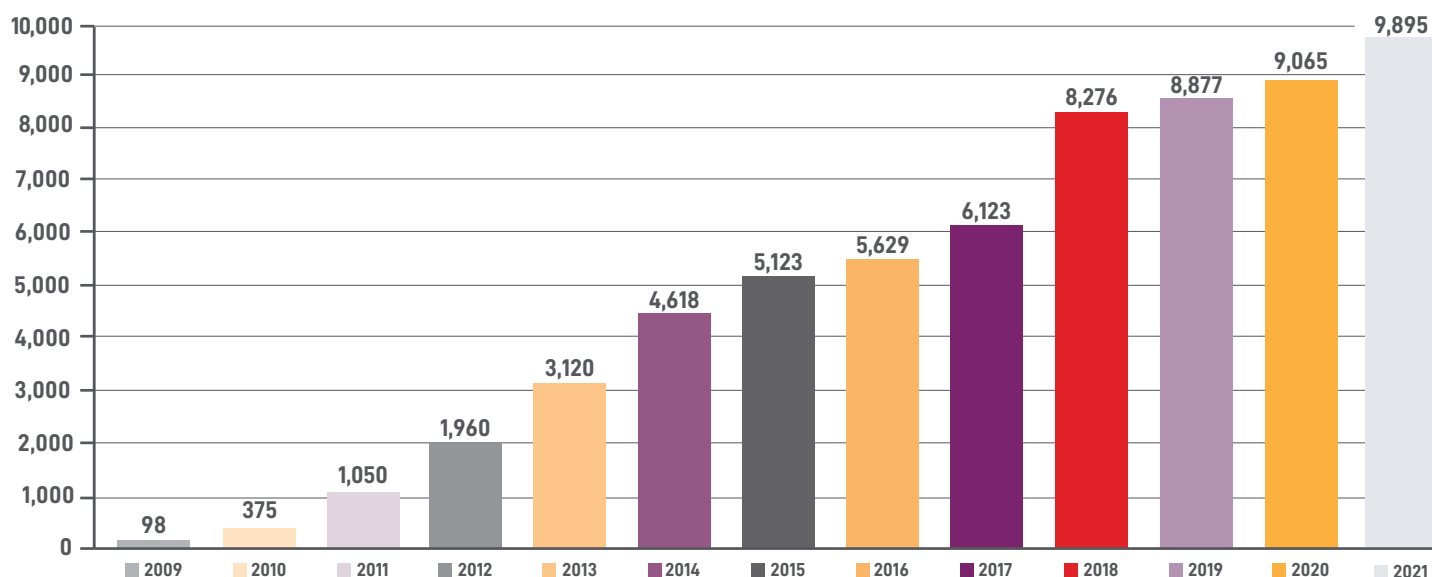
"Don't Navigate Through Cancer Alone"

"How a Nurse Navigator Can Improve Your Care," featuring Susie Ulloa, MD, RN, OCN, ONN-CG

VII. AONN+'S GROWING NAVIGATION COMMUNITY

AONN+ experienced record growth in its 12th year. Despite the continuing challenges of a global pandemic, membership grew by 14.2% to more than 9,000—far exceeding its 5% growth goal set in 2020. Comprised of industry and stakeholder advocates and non-industry navigators, this group is united by a common goal: to enhance patient care and outcomes through the advancement and growth of the navigation profession.

“By the Numbers”



This growth was achieved through a variety of tactics, including:

- Hiring Foundation for Learning Director of Certification
- Engaging with national organizations
- Sustaining partnerships and collaborations
- Research analysis of how many conference attendees convert their membership at renewal
- Exploring membership benefits and access
- Initiating conference scholarships

Moving into 2022, AONN+ will be employing the following tactics to increase its overall membership by 10%:

- Exploring new partnerships and collaborations from 2021 Member Survey suggestions
- Educating internal team, industry partners, and health systems on the value of patient navigation
- Launching Membership Campaign using voices of members exemplifying selected words to describe their AONN+ experience

VIII. HIGHLIGHTS FROM AONN+'S 2021 CONFERENCES

Midyear Conference

More than 550 individuals attended the AONN+ 2021 Midyear Conference, held May 13-16, 2021, virtually through a proprietary livestreaming platform. This 15% increase in attendance demonstrates an overall hunger for knowledge in the navigation space as well as an increase in professional interest as a whole. The conference provided a forum for open dialogue among nurse navigators and was certified for up to 16.5 contact hours of CE credit. Beginning with 2 preconference workshops covering Prehab/Rehab and The Nuts and Bolts of Building a Navigation Program, the 4-day event offered presentations and breakout sessions on a variety of relevant topics and also included time for networking.

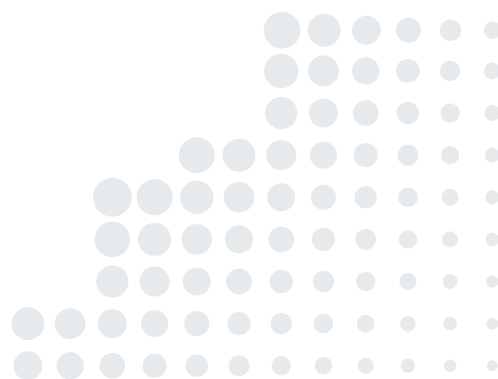
This event's growth has demonstrated patient navigation as a critical value-based strategy that has matured and evolved substantially as the navigator has become an essential part of the multidisciplinary care team. Together with the patient, nurse and patient navigators address the fragmented oncology system and assist in explaining the maze of information required to put a care plan into action. For more information on AONN+'s Midyear Conference, see page 12.

Dying Is Not Giving Up

During the 2021 Midyear Conference, AONN+ had the unique opportunity to partner with licensed psychotherapist Kelly Grosklags, who shared her documentary featuring conversations between Ms. Grosklags and her patient, Judy Erdahl. In the end stage of metastatic breast cancer, Erdahl described the very human experience of dying, from learning about her terminal diagnosis to what she hoped her death would be like. Together, along with Ms. Erdahl's family, friends, and oncologist, new perspectives were shared in hopes of making patient care more personal and meaningful.

"Our hope is that we can teach medical providers to approach difficult conversations about patient care with more empathy, respect, and compassion," said Ms. Grosklags.

After viewing the documentary, conference attendees had the opportunity to network with Ms. Grosklags.



IX. HIGHLIGHTS FROM AONN+ 2021 NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Building on the success of the 2020 annual event, AONN+ continued with the virtual platform for the 12th Annual Navigation & Survivorship Conference. More than 935 cancer care professionals attended the virtual event held November 18-21, 2021. Navigators from around the world tuned in for outstanding presentations, made new connections, and reconnected with AONN+ leadership and peers.

The 4-day event kicked off with preconference workshops that addressed issues of importance to navigators, including nutrition, survivorship, palliative care, and successfully starting a navigator program. Subsequent presentations focused on a range of topics, including navigation and health equity, chronic disease navigation, cryotherapy, acuity, and precision medicine. Additional disease site-specific presentations rounded out the agenda.

Testimonials

Here's what some of our conference attendees had to say:

"When I first heard about the virtual conference, I wasn't sure if I was going to like it or not; however I was totally surprised. I think the topics were great. The presenters were experts at what they do, and I enjoyed the experience."

Nancy Farfan, BSN, RN

Supervisor, Nurse Navigation/Site Disease Group, Miami, FL

"I was engaged the whole time. I did the preworkshop on Wednesday all the way through the closing remarks on Sunday and it was awesome. One aspect of the virtual conference that I loved was the ability to chat with other people. So, you're chatting with the AONN+ faculty plus all the attendees. If something comes up, you can type in the chat box. And it was nice to network with people from all over the country."

Brian Cecil, RN, BSN

Oncology Nurse Navigator, Ascension Genesys Hospital, Grand Blanc, MI

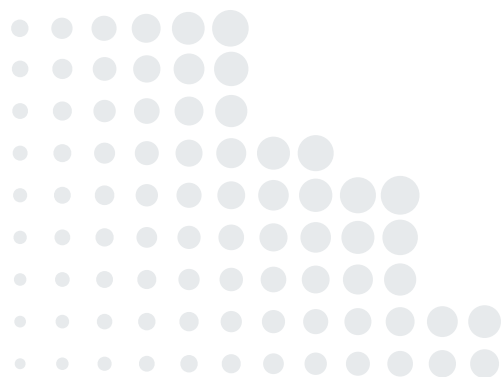
"All the speakers were very knowledgeable and very passionate about their topics, and I've gotten a lot of good ideas. Some of the sessions have been really mind blowing – expanding my concepts of what all we can do for our patients."

Kimberly Bochinski, BS

Fox Chase Cancer Center, Philadelphia, PA

"GREAT conference!! I was a little apprehensive about the virtual format but got through with very little glitches and the support team was right on track when I did have a question."

Marianne Kiernan, RN, BSN,
CN-BN, CBCN



IX. HIGHLIGHTS FROM AONN+ 2021 NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Keynote Speaker

Tamika Felder, award-winning television producer and TV host, 15-year cervical cancer survivor, and internationally recognized advocate for cervical cancer awareness, delivered the keynote address at the 12th Annual Navigation & Survivorship Conference.

After a diagnosis of advanced cervical cancer in 2001 at the age of 25, Felder decided to use her experience and her voice to help educate other women about preventing cervical cancer.

Felder spoke about how frightened she was as her life was turned upside down and the crucial role played by navigators and others, those she calls her “partners in purpose,” who helped her through this difficult time in her life. “I get to say I survived cancer because I had wonderful people in my corner,” she said.

Ms. Felder reflected on how navigators give so much of themselves as they “fill the cups of others.” This, she said, makes it crucial that they take care of themselves and understand themselves as caregivers, especially now when they are expected to give so much.

Using humor and video clips, she encouraged navigators to find their “why” and consider not just “what” they do, but “why” they do it and to use this insight as a source of inspiration. Today, Ms. Felder heads an organization she founded, Cervivor, that supports and advocates for patients with cervical cancer. She also serves on the board of the Global Coalition Against Cervical Cancer.

Preconference Workshops Met with Enthusiasm and Strong Attendance

A popular offering this year were the preconference workshops, which were designed to provide attendees with dedicated time for in-depth exploration. The 2021 Annual Conference offered attendees 4 interactive sessions on topics specifically targeted to navigators.

2021 Preconference Workshops:

- **“Nutrition in Cancer Care”** – Presented by Audrey Caspar-Clark, MA, RDN, LDN; Patricia Corby, DDS, MS; Amy Patton, MHI, RD, CSO, CNSC; and Eugenie Spiguel, MSN, HNP, ANP-BC
- **“All the Things You Wish You Knew/ABCs to Start a Navigation Program”** – Presented by Kristina Rua, MSN, RN, OCN, ONN-CG; Mary Salazar, DNP, MSN, ANP-BC; Amelia Shealy, BSN, RN, OCN, CN-BN; Zarek Mena, OPN-CG; Clara Lambert, BBA, OPN-CG; and Katie Ozuna, LMSW, OSW-C, OPN-CG
- **“Palliative Care: What Navigators Need to Know”** – Presented by Nancy Joyner, MS, CNS-BC, APRN, ACHPN; Sarah McSpadden, RN, MSN, MHA; Jennifer Wilson, APRN, AGCNS-BC, ACHPN; and Mary Murray, APRN, AGCNS-BC, ACHPN
- **“Survivorship”** – Presented by Nancy Corbitt, BSN, RN, OCN; Cathy Spagnoli, MSHA, RN, CBCN, CN-BN, ONN-CG; Jason Morrow, RN, BSN, OCN; Sarah Murphy, MSN-L, RN, ONN-CG; Sandra Olvera, MSN, FNP-BC; Sara Stewart, RN; and Christina Miller, LCPC, OPN-CG

IX. HIGHLIGHTS FROM AONN+ 2021 NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Building a Culture of Learning and Success

For many, the prospect of conducting and publishing research is daunting if not terrifying. AONN+ is working to take the fear out of this process by creating a nurturing environment in which navigators can learn about the process and make mistakes safely. The success of this approach was evident in the number of abstracts submitted for presentation at the 2021 Annual Conference. In total, 46 abstracts were submitted and 40 were accepted. Join us in congratulating the winners of each category:



Abstracts were submitted for consideration in 2021.



Abstracts were accepted.



Winners were selected.

Category I – Community Outreach/Prevention Winner: “The Genetic Management Clinic: Navigating Cancer Risk Management”

Authors: Stephanie Hoopes, RN, BSN, OCN, ONN-CG; Virginia Simmons, MPH; LeAnn Perkins, FNP-BC, DipACLM; Gail Stapleton, MS, CGC; and Allison Bellomo, MS, CGC

Category II – Care Coordination/Care Transitions Winner: “Rectal, Esophageal and Pancreatic Cancer Stacked Testing”

Authors: Amanda Wright, RN, BSN, and Kathy Comella, RN, BSN

Category III – Patient Empowerment/Patient Advocacy Winner: “Patient Preferences and Understanding of a Precision Medicine Lexicon – Towards the Development of Patient-Friendly, Consistent Terminology”

Authors: M. Claire Saxton, MBA; Maria B. Gonzalo, MS; Jenny Karubian, MA; Helen M. Nichols, PhD; Sanjana Quasem, MPH; and Danelle Johnston, MSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, OCN

Category IV – Psychosocial Support/Assessment Winner: “Patient Lay Navigator Program: An Approach to Enhancing Patients’ Access to Psychosocial Support and Reducing Non-clinical Barriers Associated with Care”

Authors: Shelita Anderson, MBA, BSN, RN, OCN; Carol Kirton, BSN, RN, OCN, ONN-CG; Renjitha Kolambel, MSN, RN, OCN; and Shirley Ruiz, BSN, RN, OCN, ONN-CG, CBCN

Category V – Professional Roles and Responsibilities and the Need for Navigation Winner: “HCPOA Experiences with Nurse Navigator-Led Advance Care Planning”

Authors: Catherine Bailey, RN, BSN, Oncology Nurse Navigator; Megan Rappleyea, RN, MSN, OCN, CNE; and Tenille Oderwald, RN, MSN, CN-BN

Category VI – Research, Quality, Performance Improvement Winner: “Creating an Electronic Referral to Help Identify Patients with Breast Cancer Needing Navigation Services”

Author: Melissa Douglas, BSN, RN, CBCN

Category VII – Operations Management, Organization Development, Health Economics Winner: “The Impact of an Electronic Health Record to Advancing Nurse Navigation Using Standardized Metrics in a Healthcare System”

Authors: Jeanne Silva, MSN, RN-BC, CMSRN, CN-BN, and Avni Patel, BSN, RN

Category VIII – Survivorship/End of Life Winner: “The Role of the Navigator in an Augmented Intelligence (AI) Supported on Utilization of Palliative Care Services in Oncology”

Authors: Ajeet Gajra, MD; Yolaine Jeune-Smith, PhD; Amy Ellis; Kelly A. Miller, DNP, MPH; Danielle Bergman, RN; John Showalter, MD; and Sibel Blau, MD

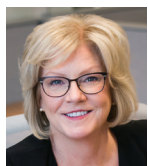
IX. HIGHLIGHTS FROM AONN+ 2021 NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Recognizing the Contributions of Our Members, Partners, and Patients

Each year, at the Annual Conference, AONN+ recognizes the hard work and achievements of several individuals and partner organizations. This year's awards are clear reminders of the tremendous talent that exists within our membership and broader community. Congratulations to all our winners and nominees!

Putting Evidence into Practice Research Award

Recognition of an AONN+ member who has conducted evidence-based research that builds upon the body of work in navigation.



Tricia Strusowski, RN, MS, is an independent contractor with more than 37 years of experience in the oncology field. Tricia has worked in a variety of roles, including oncology nurse, nurse manager, case management, a

clinical director overseeing a multitude of departments, including chemotherapy infusion, rehabilitation program, multidisciplinary disease site centers, thoracic surgery, palliative care, oncology medical home program, wellness programs, and bone marrow coordinators, and accreditation program.

Her passion is in patient- and family-centered care in the oncology landscape. In conjunction with serving on multiple advisory boards, she implemented 15 multidisciplinary cancer centers including breast, lung, head/neck, pancreatic, and various other tumor site-specific teams.

Strusowski puts this rich work history to practice in consulting on the strategic development and implementation of oncology clinical programs within private practices, hospitals, and health systems across the country. She has presented and published nationally. Ms. Strusowski chairs the AONN+ Metrics Committee, is the co-chair of the AONN+ Navigation Acuity project, past co-chair of the ACS National Navigation Roundtable Evidence-Based Promising Practice Committee, and participated in the Biden Cancer Initiative for Patient Navigation.

As you see from Ms. Strusowski's leadership, she has a true passion for metrics implementation and seeing navigation programs succeed in applying metrics to their programs.

AONN+ 2021 Ambassador Award

In recognition of exceptional leadership and devoted service sharing AONN+'s mission to oncology patients, families, and professional communities.



Zarek Mena, OPN-CG, has 15 years of experience in the field of patient navigation, survivorship viewpoint, Local Navigator Network leadership, and is a caregiver at heart. She was instrumental in the creation of the Smilow Family Breast Health Center and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center Physicians affiliation at Whittingham Cancer Center at Nuvance Health, including its numerous support programs.

She currently serves as Women's Health Program Manager, bringing the Commission on Cancer and National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers accreditation standards to the next level.

Ms. Mena also facilitates AONN+'s Fairfield County Patient Navigation Network, and participates in community advocacy efforts showing her passion to serve the cancer community. She assists with the AONN+ LNN Development and Sustainability team, Conference Planning Committee, and is a member of the AONN+ Leadership Council, bringing insight to promote inclusivity and multidisciplinary approaches to navigation.

Ms. Mena's passion in serving the underrepresented and historically excluded communities has led to implementing local programs addressing various needs such as food insecurity, cold capping, and grant funding, as well as cancer screening through the Connecticut Early Detection and Prevention Program.

AONN+ has been enriched by her knowledge on the ways in which patients define value in the cancer care system and how those definitions can be incorporated into public policy and clinical practice.

IX. HIGHLIGHTS FROM AONN+ 2021 NATIONAL CONFERENCE

AONN+ Organizational Recognition Award

Acknowledging employers who recognize and support oncology navigation.

Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, part of UHealth

– The University of Miami Health System is a university-based cancer center, where Sylvester physicians and scientists apply research breakthroughs from the laboratory to the patient's bedside. Sylvester closely evaluates the effectiveness of new treatments, and shares clinical insights with laboratory investigators, leading to improvements that benefit patient care. Sylvester's mission is to reduce the human burden from cancer through research, education, prevention, and the delivery of quality patient care.

Sylvester's nurse navigators' mission is to improve the cancer experience for every patient. Patient care is their top priority. The navigators are here to provide compassion, guidance, and support throughout a patient's complex treatment journey.

AONN+ recognizes our Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center navigation colleagues for their hard work and dedication, and their contribution collectively in the work of advancing navigation. Their commitment to professional development and lifelong learning is exemplified as they offer engaging WebEx education; serve as faculty at AONN+ Midyear and Annual conferences and Facebook Live events; lead and serve within national committees, such as Abstract, Conference Planning and, finally, publish and submit abstracts and articles to invest in the growth of the navigation profession. In addition, Sylvester colleagues serve in leadership positions within the AONN+ Foundation for Learning, and supported strides in achieving national accreditation. We hope this award will serve as a reminder to all of you within the Sylvester Comprehensive Center of your many achievements within navigation and as a valued partner with AONN+.

2021 Oncology Navigation Excellence Award

Awarded to an oncology navigator for his or her outstanding contributions to oncology navigation, patient care, or education.

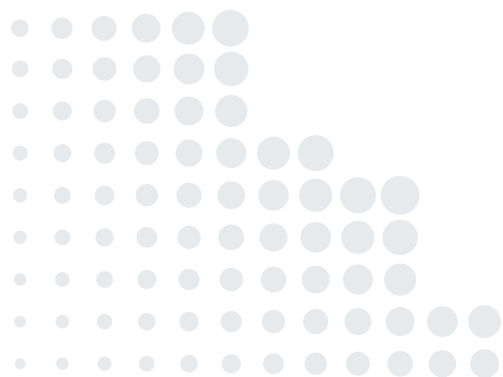


Kellie Mitchell, BSN, RN, OCN, has been Oncology Nurse Navigator at Wellstar Paulding for 3 years. She has greatly expanded the role to meet the needs of the patients, by transforming the role from Breast Navigator to include serving breast, head and neck, surgery, diagnostics,

outpatient infusion, radiation oncology, and medical oncology patients. Ms. Mitchell became an Oncology Certified Nurse (OCN) during the first year in her new navigator role because she wanted to be the best for her patients. Ms. Mitchell felt that gaining more knowledge and becoming certified would do just that.

She is an invaluable asset to the hospital system and community, serving on several boards internally and externally as a resource of knowledge. She works tirelessly to assist patients in their entire cancer journey. One of her biggest concerns is for those patients who do not have insurance benefits but are in need of healthcare services.

Ms. Mitchell has partnered with inpatient leaders to develop performance improvement projects to improve patient care and safety. By listening to patients' concerns, she led the project to transform the Radiation Oncology department's decorum. The department was brightened up and enhanced so patients would feel comfortable and remain hopeful. This was featured as a Magnet story for the hospital. Ms. Mitchell also started the Cancer Support Group for the community and pioneered the hospital's first Cancer Survivors Day! In her spare time, she volunteers in the community and partners with several community organizations, such as Loving Arms Cancer Outreach, to meet the needs of patients.



IX. HIGHLIGHTS FROM AONN+ 2021 NATIONAL CONFERENCE

2021 Hero of Hope Award

The Hero of Hope Patient Award annually recognizes an individual whose life is touched by cancer for his or her outstanding contributions to the cancer community.



In December 2015, just 3 short weeks after her 43rd birthday, **Meg Knight**, a wife and mother of a 2-year-old son, learned she had breast cancer. On any normal day, her husband would have been home from work, but he coincidentally was at the dentist, so she first told him via text message as she then proceeded to call her

mother and sister with the news, all while admirably keeping her composure so as not to alarm her son. And when her husband arrived home, they hugged and she said, "I know I will be okay, we caught it early."

Ms. Knight followed her regular daily routine to distract her from dealing with her news, until a family friend asked those 4 simple words, "how are you doing," and it finally all hit her. As she allowed herself to feel her feelings, she felt an instant calmness and decided to make the choice to be strong and remain positive—she had no other choice!

After much deliberation, Ms. Knight decided in January 2016 to have a double mastectomy and would begin her healing process. She changed many of her lifestyle habits and began a blog, "In Common We Inspire," where her goal has been and remains to share her story, spread light and inspiration in others, and create a forum where others are not afraid to share their stories as well! And through this, she has touched the lives of so many patients, survivors, family members, and caregivers, who often tell her how inspiring she has been along their healing journey.

As Ms. Knight said, "It amazes me that there can be such a connection and an immediate bond between 2 complete strangers after hearing their story, to find out you're not alone. I hold 3 powerful words dear—persevere, heal, inspire: this is my new purpose in life. We are here in this world and journey together, and in common we inspire to change lives forever."

Lillie Shockney Lifetime Achievement Award

The Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes an AONN+ member for his or her career achievements and outstanding contributions to cancer care in navigation and to the Academy.



Linda Fleisher, PhD, MPH, HON-OPN-CG, has been a strategic leader, powerful voice, and advocate for patient navigators since the inception of AONN+. Not only has she exemplified the mission and vision of the Academy within the organization, but she has been very involved in her own community.

She was an original member of the Leadership Council and consistently participated in setting strategic priorities, organizational planning, and evaluation of programs to lead AONN+ forward.

One of the core competencies of a patient navigator is "to identify appropriate and credible resources responsive to patient needs (practical, social, physical, emotional, spiritual), taking into consideration reading level, health literacy, culture, language, and amount of information desired." Her face is a visual of that definition as she has more than 3 decades of health disparities and health communications projects. She has developed technical guides on health literacy and patient navigation for professionals, and brings these skills and knowledge to the development of patient education tools and resources. She has also led a team of professionals providing content development, literacy review, and usability testing for many web-based and ehealth tools. She goes further by building networks and partnerships with diverse audiences, including healthcare organizations, software developers, patients, and community leaders. She has extensive background in health communications, digital health, and partnerships to lead a digital health initiative focused on translating knowledge of evaluation and evidence to health app developers, distributors, and consumers to ensure that the explosion of mobile health tools is evidence-based and their impact on health improvement is validated. She has the heart of a researcher by promoting quality improvement initiatives. She also continues a focus on tobacco cessation treatment.

With AONN+, she is actively involved in the Technology and Innovation Committee, CAPE lung project, podcasts, Facebook Live, and was an analytical voice in "The Critical Need for a Complete Cancer Team While Transitioning Out of the Pandemic."

X. SUPPORTING AND GROWING AONN+'S LOCAL NAVIGATOR NETWORKS

Our Network Continues to Grow

Expanding and supporting the development of Local Navigator Networks (LNNs) remains a priority for AONN+. These chapters facilitate communication and education among peers, which is critical to the advancement of the profession. In 2021, we activated 4 new LNNs, bringing our total number to 35, including 3 virtual groups and 1 international.

Enhancing the development and sustainability of the LNNs was also supported by the initiation of quarterly LNN leadership calls, the finalized LNN Welcome/Orientation booklet that implemented the 2019 LNN survey findings, and the promotion of virtual LNNs in answer to the pandemic. The quarterly newsletter to LNN leaders continued, and many shared the information using Facebook and other digital communication tools. The Speakers Bureau continued for LNNs across the United States and many regional sites that do not support an LNN.

Revitalized Colorado LNN

Instead of being inactivated, Colorado LNN was revitalized by the work of the Colorado Cancer Coalition. Inactivation means the LNN leader recognizes that the network can no longer be sustained in their region. This can be due to leaders changing jobs or moving from the area. The inactivation process allows a root-cause analysis with AONN+ leadership and a reach out to other LNNs in the area to step up and sustain the group. As with Colorado, many find a new leader to remain viable in the community. This allows growth of new leadership.

Congratulations to the new LNNs added to these areas in 2021:

National Breast Cancer Foundation Virtual LNN

Northwest LNN (Portland, Oregon)

Southeast Louisiana

Indigenous Peoples Navigation Network (IPNN)

New Indigenous Peoples Navigation Network (IPNN, pronounced “I pin”)

Native American Cancer Research Corporation (NACR) has implemented patient navigation services since 1994 and conducted Native Patient Navigator trainings since the latter 1990s. Following these trainings, Patient Navigators (PNs) repeatedly expressed appreciation for the opportunity to talk, network, and collaborate with other PNs who work within indigenous settings. Through NACR's involvement with organizations like AONN+, they were able to create an international indigenous network through AONN+ to help support one another in our cancer navigation efforts.

Why an Indigenous Peoples Navigation Network?

There are both cultural and geographic challenges and solutions that may be unique to indigenous communities and the PNs who work in those areas. Many navigators work in isolation. The focus of IPNN is sharing stories of how navigation programs have overcome challenges in culturally respectful ways. Such stories may help PNs working in other regions or continents develop strategies to improve patient care within their local settings.

IPNN provides a virtual support program to address culturally and geographically unique challenges and solutions of indigenous navigation programs. Participants include cancer patient navigators who work within indigenous programs in the United States, Pacific Islands, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia.

Linda Burhansstipanov, MSPH, DrPH, is the IPNN leader and holds meetings twice a month to accommodate the different time zones of the navigators. Linda is on the AONN+ Leadership Council and is part of NACR, Native American Cancer Initiatives, Inc., Denver, CO.

X. SUPPORTING AND GROWING AONN+'S LOCAL NAVIGATOR NETWORKS

Outstanding Local Navigator Network Award Goes to Fairfield County (Connecticut)

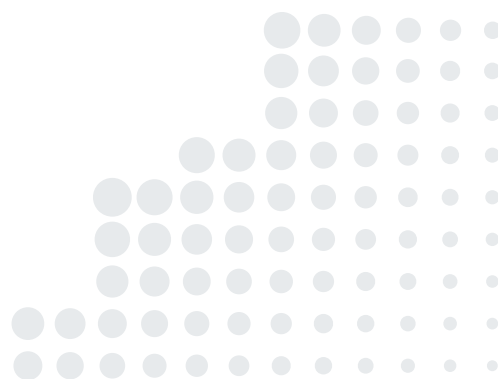
The Outstanding Local Navigator Network Award recognizes a Local Navigator Network's outstanding effort in the establishment of a forum for professional development and networking that aligns with the Academy's mission.

Fairfield County, CT, the 2021 recipient of the Outstanding LNN Award, originated in 2019 and has a leadership team that includes active "boots on the ground" navigators, survivors, and representation from a national cancer organization. This created an ideal partnership as well as a consistent member that has an "in" with all the cancer centers. Their national representative promotes the LNN and invites all interested parties creating a consistent interest for membership and networking. They also engage with other organizations like CancerCare, etc. What is most unique to this LNN is that it has a cancer survivor in attendance so there is always a voice for patient experience and perspective.

This LNN leadership consistently encourages AONN+ membership, conference attendance, and will be a host regional site for a future AONN+ FFL certification.

Congratulations to Fairfield County as the 2021 Outstanding LNN. This Connecticut group is co-led by **Zarek Mena**, OPN-CG, and **Sharyn Taymor**, Community Advocate.

The recipient of the AONN+ Outstanding Local Navigator Network Award receives a plaque, an acknowledgment in the *Journal of Oncology Navigation & Survivorship*, and a sponsored dinner with a speaker for 1 LNN meeting.



XI. WHAT OUR MEMBERS ARE SAYING - KEY RESULTS FROM THE 2021 MEMBER SURVEY UPDATES

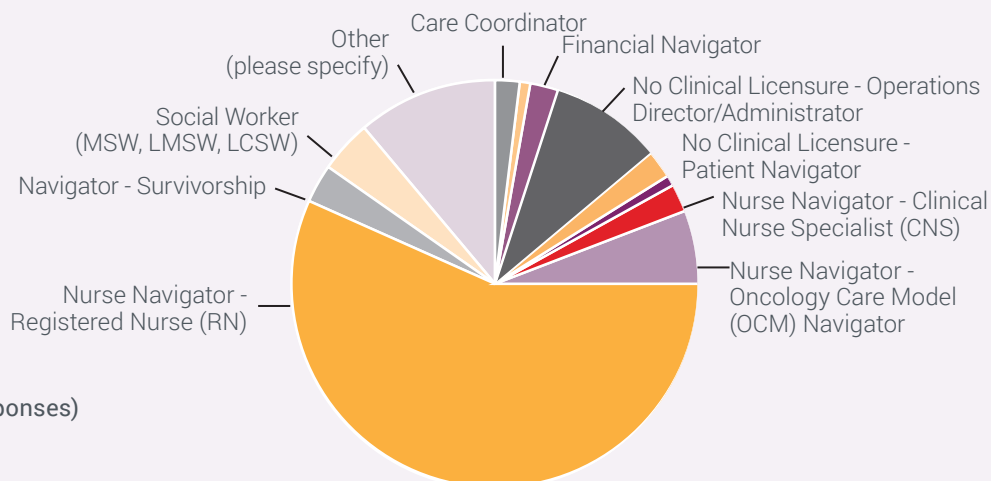
Every 2 years, AONN+ sends out a membership survey to capture the voice of active navigators. This allows us to capture a picture of navigation and to incorporate our members' needs and asks in our focus. The survey is pushed out to members and sent through LNN Leaders, Leadership Council members, and committee chairs to encourage participation. The results are shared with the Leadership Council and the AONN+ Leadership team as they review and set strategy for the coming years. It also allows The Lynx Group, our managing company, to share the navigators' voice with pharmaceutical and medical companies as they design projects and education pertaining to navigation.

AONN+ is grateful for all the navigators do each day and their voice that allows AONN+ to represent them as a national professional organization.

Key Survey Takeaways

After an analysis of credentials and the "Other" category, the primary roles of survey respondents are Nurse (74%), Patient Navigator (10%), Director/Manager (5.5%), Advocacy/Professional Groups (4.5%), Social Workers (4%), and Financial Navigators (1.5%).

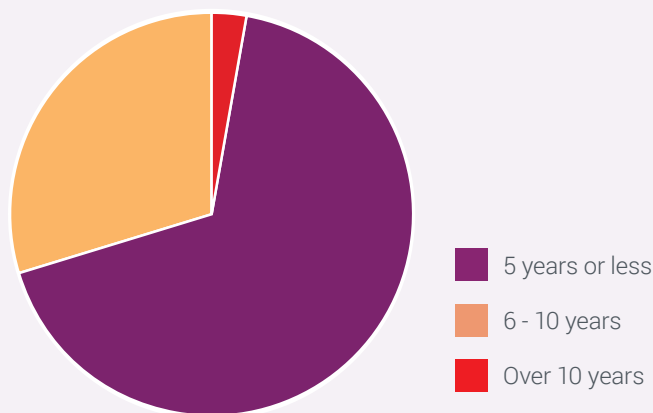
(Results based on 123 survey responses)



Navigation Experience

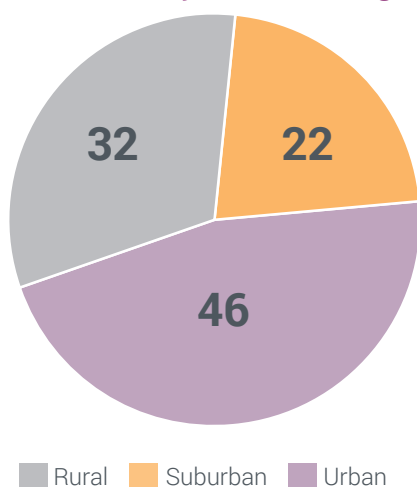
The majority have a bachelor's degree or higher and more than 50% maintain an additional certification. More than 95% see adult- or geriatric-age patients.

More than half have been navigating, supporting, and educating patients with cancer in their role as a navigator for 5 years or less. This is consistent with what we have seen in past years with many having more oncology experience but fewer years of navigation experience.



XI. WHAT OUR MEMBERS ARE SAYING - KEY RESULTS FROM THE 2021 MEMBER SURVEY UPDATES

Community Work Setting

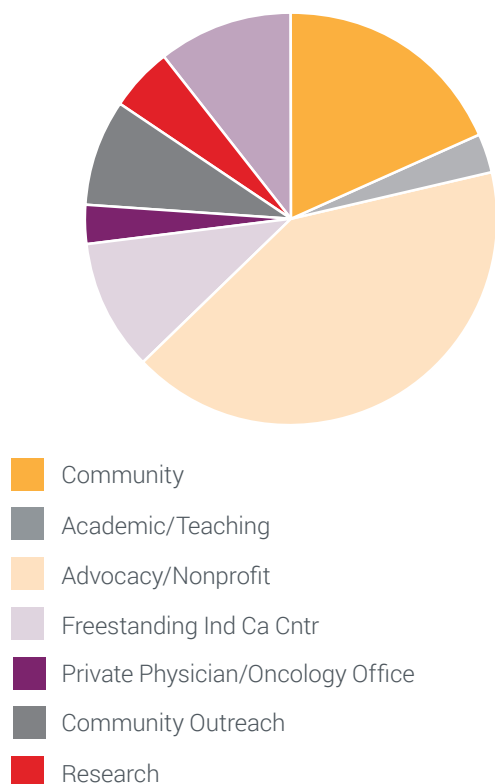


The majority perform disease-site navigation with the leading solid tumors being lung, breast, and colorectal. Those who concentrated in the hematology sector saw multiple myeloma, lymphoma, leukemia, and myelodysplastic syndromes in that order of frequency. More than one-third were general or multisite navigators, and 3% were financial navigators.

When asked about the assessments that were incorporated into the practice for the care of your patients, distress, financial concerns, nutritional needs, pain, adherence to follow-up, health literacy, and fatigue were performed by more than 50% of the navigators.

Thirty-four percent were using the AONN+ metrics in their program; 41% were aware of them but not implementing them, and the others were not aware of the AONN+ Metrics library. When questioned about general navigation outcome metrics, 50% are measuring those; 37% are planning to implement them, and 13% do not measure or plan to in the future.

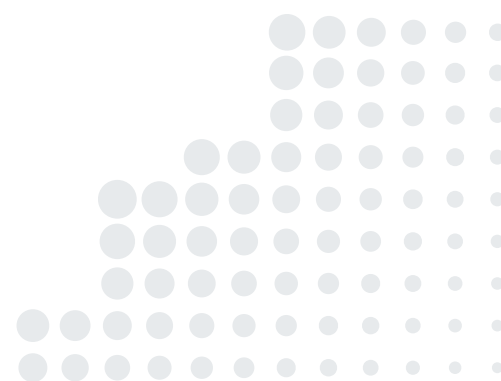
Practice Setting



The top barriers in trying to use a tool to capture metrics were:

- Difficulty with IT systems
- Multiple platforms/software
- Lack of administration support
- Lack of training/knowledge
- No staffing or funding

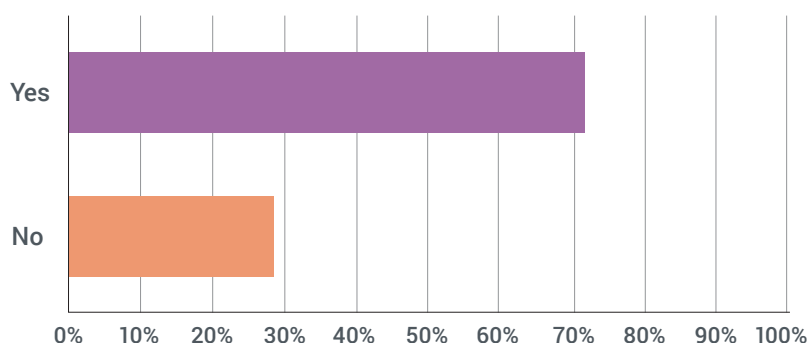
Only 21% have an electronic medical record with an identifier to flag patients who have received navigation.



XI. WHAT OUR MEMBERS ARE SAYING - KEY RESULTS FROM THE 2021 MEMBER SURVEY UPDATES

more than
60% When asked about the interventions that are employed in the care of patients, **more than 60%** used financial assistance, support groups, dietitian, caregiver resources, transportation, counseling, genetic counselor, palliative care, social worker, and clinical trials.

Are you a participating member of your institution's tumor board conferences for treatment planning discussions?



71%

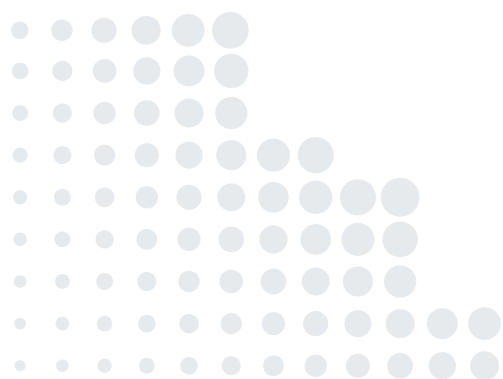
are active in tumor boards with the top 3 tasks:

- Listen and take notes to understand plan to educate patient
- Provide information about patient life circumstances
- Take notes and distribute to team

Only 15% currently use an acuity tool.

Thirty-nine percent have access to a financial navigator, and when asked further about who helps the patients financially, the responses were billing, social worker, nurse navigator, and patient navigator.

The common tools to educate and support patients were print, website, demonstration, and video. Navigators' preference to receive professional education were websites, in person, webinars, print, and virtual. Only 29% use QR codes.



XII. ADVANCING THE PROFESSION – NATIONAL COMMITTEE UPDATES

AONN+’s committees are integral to advancing the Academy’s mission and success. This section of the report serves to highlight each committee’s prior year’s achievements as well as their goals for the upcoming year. Reflecting on AONN+’s commitment to “listen to the voice of our membership,” a new Policy and Advocacy Committee was added this year.

Abstract Review Committee

Mission: The mission of the Abstract Review Committee is to objectively review AONN+ member abstracts and provide feedback for revision, with the greater goal of building momentum and evidence around navigation.

Co-Chairs:

Christina Laird, MBA
Christinaplaird@gmail.com

Interim Co-Chair:

Emily Gentry, BSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, OCN
emily.gentry@amplity.com

2021 Accomplishments

- Transitioned leadership and welcomed a new co-chair: Christina Laird
- Abstract Committee refined abstract review process and developed a new “Abstract Reviewer Tip Sheet”
- Abstract Review Committee reviewed 46 abstracts for the 2021 abstract cycle. The committee rejected 6 abstracts and forwarded 40 abstracts for final acceptance at the AONN+ Annual Conference

2022 Goals

- Recruit a second co-chair leadership position
- Support authorship for a *JONS* article on abstract submission
- In 2022, review 10% more abstracts than 2021
- Continue to promote AONN+ to peers and recruit an additional abstract reviewer
- Continue to diversify the abstracts submitted and presented at the annual meeting

Professional Development Committee

Mission: The mission of the Professional Development Committee is to provide mentorship support to AONN+ members in the areas of quality, process improvement, metrics, and reporting.

Co-Chairs:

Natalie Fellers
Natalie.Fellers@Northside.com

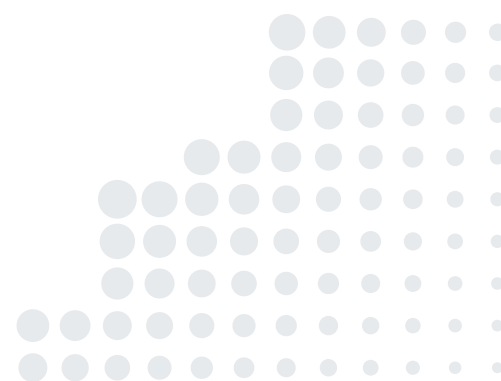
Patricia Johnson, BS, RN, OCN, CBCN
pjohnson@cvph.org

2021 Accomplishments

- AONN+ “Heart & Soul of Oncology Navigation” podcast: Professional Development Mentorship
- Panelist at the 2021 Midyear Preconference Workshop: “Building a Navigation Program”
- Explored the establishment of a formal mentorship program with AONN+

2022 Goals

- Build a Mentorship Toolkit to launch at AONN+ Midyear Conference
- Establish a Navigation Metrics Mentor Program, in collaboration with the Metrics Committee
- Recruit committee members
- Develop an educational resource highlighting a professional development skill set regarding blogs, podcasts, journal articles
- Succession leadership planning



XII. ADVANCING THE PROFESSION – NATIONAL COMMITTEE UPDATES

Metrics Committee

Mission: The mission of the Metrics Committee is to support value-based cancer care initiatives utilizing the 35 AONN+ national evidence-based metrics in the areas of patient experience, clinical outcomes, and return on investment.

Chair

Tricia Strusowski, MS, RN
tstrusowski7@gmail.com

2021 Accomplishments

- Collaborated with the Innovation and Technology Committee and facilitated a Zoom focus group on September 1, 2021, to discuss the challenges and opportunities with implementing metrics
- Collaborated with the Policy and Advocacy Committee to discuss navigation role delineation
- Collaborated with the Survivorship Committee to brainstorm 2022 collaboration
- Role delineation, metrics, and national standards crosswalk and article (*JONS*, January 2021)
- Facilitated a Facebook Live session on Psychosocial Distress Screening
- Presented at AONN+ Annual Conference, "Caution, Metrics Can Be Addicting"

2022 Goals

Tier 1 Goals

- Establish a Navigation Metrics Mentor Program, in collaboration with the Professional Development Committee
- Discuss and share Navigation Reports and Dashboards; discuss what navigators do and do not need to collect
- Operationalize 25 metrics prioritizing return on investment, in collaboration with the Technology and Innovation Committee
- Update and revise "How Do We Explain Our Role as Navigators?"

Tier 2 Goals

- Discuss how metrics play a role in the patient needs assessment and identifying barriers
- Review CoC Criteria for Survivorship and how metrics can play a role, in collaboration with the Survivorship Committee
- Facilitate a presentation on Decreasing Emergency Department Visits with Navigation

Survivorship Committee

Mission: The mission of the Survivorship Committee is to advance survivorship care throughout the continuum by providing resources and evidence-based education to oncology navigators.

Co-Chairs

Nancy Corbitt, BSN, RN, OCN, CRNI
ncorbitt@umm.edu

Jason Morrow, RN, BSN, OCN

Jason.Morrow@PrismaHealth.org

2021 Accomplishments

- AONN+ "Heart & Soul of Oncology Navigation" podcast "Young Adults with Cancer: Coordination of Care in the AYA Population"
- Webinar Fertility Preservation 101
- Facilitated Facebook Live - Navigate Now: How Can We Help? "Psychosocial Care of the Oncology Patient"
- Panelist at the 2021 Midyear Preconference Workshop "Building a Navigation Program"
- Panelist at the 2021 Midyear Conference session "Difficult Conversations with Your Oncology Colleagues"
- Collaboration with the Metrics Committee to brainstorm ideas regarding metrics and survivorship issues (to be continued as a goal in 2022)
- In collaboration with the Technology and Innovation Committee, facilitated a Survivorship Focus Group
- Panel members at the Association for Value-Based Cancer Care Annual Conference
- Webinar presenting the Effects of COVID
- Facilitated Facebook Live - Navigate Now: How Can We Help? "The Impact of Movement, Exercise, and Oncology Rehabilitation on Survivorship"
- Survivorship Committee Preconference Workshop "Survivorship: Care Along the Continuum" at the AONN+ 12th Annual Conference
- Presenter at the 12th Annual Conference, breakout session, "Fertility"

2022 Goals

- Proceed with manuscript for *JONS*
- Review CoC Criteria for Survivorship and how metrics can play a role in collaboration with the Metrics Committee

XII. ADVANCING THE PROFESSION – NATIONAL COMMITTEE UPDATES

Technology and Innovation Committee

Mission: The mission of the Technology and Innovation Committee is to identify member needs and provide education, tools, and best practice solutions to advance the use of diverse technology solutions that improve efficiency and value across unique practice settings, navigator roles, and patient populations.

Chair:

Gena Middleton, MS, APRN-CNS, AOCNS
gmiddleton@familycarepath.com

Committee Goals

- Advocate for the value of technology that supports improved efficiency and the delivery of quality cancer care
- Collaborate with AONN+ members and committees to address obstacles in standardizing, collecting, and managing data for the following metrics: patient experience, clinical outcomes, and return on investment
- Develop and deliver educational programs and tools
- Foster sharing of innovative practices
- Engage AONN+ members, national navigation thought leaders, and technology vendors to ensure national navigation standards and the role of the navigator is represented, and communicate impact of collaboration to members

2021 Accomplishments

- Executed Strategic Plan based on AONN+ Member Survey, national navigation feedback trends
- Prioritized raising awareness of the value of technology in metrics, telehealth, and remote navigation
 - Hosted 3 Focus Groups – Financial Navigation, Metrics, and Survivorship
 - Facebook Live – “Trends in Oncology Care”
 - Podcast – “Role of the Navigator in Virtual Tumor Boards”
 - Midyear and Annual conferences – general sessions presentations
 - Contributed to AONN+ COVID Toolkit
 - Member Polling Questions – conferences, Facebook Live, surveys
- Proactively seek opportunities to collaborate and network
 - Integrate technology best practices into AONN+ resources
 - Outreach to AONN+ committees – Metrics, Survivorship, Genetics, Conference Planning
 - Support AONN+ national initiatives – professional development, addressing social determinants of health
- Committee team-building
 - Recruited 4 new members
 - Project teams established
 - Ongoing efforts to foster team communication

- Develop 2022 Strategic Planning with focus on delivering resources to support increased utilization of technology by navigators and patients
 - What’s currently available
 - What’s on the near horizon

2022 Goals

Support National Strategic Plan for education and resource development

- Provide resources to increase member awareness and utilization of current and innovative technology
 - Focus on “Technology How To” and highlight innovative best practices
 - Conduct virtual focus groups to solicit member feedback and inform strategic plan
 - ✦ Include cross-functional roles (clinical, nonclinical)
 - ✦ Topics TBD
 - Increase committee visibility and impact through increased presence on AONN+ social media
 - ✦ Submit 2 topics for Facebook Live sessions
 - ✦ Submit 2 topics for podcast sessions
 - ✦ Transition “Navigator Innovation in the Time of COVID” initiative from survey format to social media
 - Contribute technology-specific information to AONN+ toolkits
- Collaborate with AONN+ committees to integrate technology/innovation education into educational content
 - Midyear and Annual conferences – submit session topics to highlight innovations in technology and sharing best practices
 - Metrics – address focus group feedback: (1) how technology supports metrics collection; and (2) highlight workflow customization beyond EPIC EMR
 - Survivorship – address focus group feedback to support: (1) meeting CoC standards; and (2) meeting survivorship plan needs across varied practice settings
 - Professional development – contribute to National Mentorship initiative with focus on utilizing technology to help achieve navigation program goals
 - ACS National Navigation Roundtable – the role of technology in workforce development
 - Prevention and early detection – collaboration opportunities
- Explore opportunities to engage third-party vendors to ensure that navigation workflow is represented during development
- Recruit and retain committee members

XII. ADVANCING THE PROFESSION – NATIONAL COMMITTEE UPDATES

Policy and Advocacy Committee

Mission: The mission of the Policy and Advocacy Committee is to utilize legislative, regulatory, and policy advocacy to protect and promote the practice of oncology patient navigation in order to best serve individuals and families impacted by cancer.

Chair:

Jamie Callahan, BSN-RN, OCN, CBCN
Jamie.callahan@uchealth.org

2021 Accomplishments

- Signed on to letters to:
 - Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices Regarding COVID-19 Vaccines and Patients with Cancer
 - Becerra on Protected Classes in Medicare Part D
 - Accelerating COVID-19 Vaccination for Patients with Cancer
 - Support of the Medicare Multi-Cancer Early Detection Screening Coverage Act
 - Support of Reducing Hereditary Cancer Act of 2021
 - Support for National Paid Family and Medical Leave Program
 - Support Patient Advocacy Language in Cures 2.0 Legislation
 - Administrator Brooks-LaSure on exercising caution in making changes to Medicare & Medicaid Services payment policies during the COVID-19 pandemic
 - Congress on Passage of DIVERSE Trials Act
 - Voice opposition to Radiation Oncology Reimbursement Cuts
 - Support Accelerating Kids' Access to Care Act
- Hosted Facebook Live: Advocacy in a Virtual Landscape
- Presented 2021 Annual Conference Session: Policy and Advocacy – Screening
- Partnered with the Professional Oncology Navigation Task Force on the Oncology Navigation Standards

2022 Goals

- Continue to monitor sign-on letter opportunities on behalf of AONN+
- Co-chair committee recruitment
- Committee member recruitment

Clinical Trials Committee

Mission: The mission of the Clinical Trials Committee is to provide education and support to navigators to promote clinical trials to their patients and institutions.

Interim Chair:

Emily Gentry, BSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, OCN
emily.gentry@amplify.com

2021 Accomplishment

- Collaborated with Pfizer Clinical Trials Workstream

2022 Goals

- Recruitment of 2 new co-chair leaders
- Recruit new committee members
- Share best practices regarding navigation role in clinical trials
- Collaborate with the other AONN+ committees such as Professional Development

Conference Planning Committee

Mission: The mission of the Conference Planning Committee is to provide relevant and high-value conference agendas and speakers that will enhance and develop members' professional growth and development.

Co-Chairs:

Penny Daugherty, RN, MS, OCN, ONN-CG
Penny.Daugherty@northside.com

Peg Rummel, RN, MHA, OCN, NE-BC
Margaret.Rummel@pennmedicine.upenn.edu

2021 Accomplishments

- Implemented AONN+ Midyear and Annual conferences with record number in attendance
- Identified and mentored new co-chairs to begin oversight in 2022

2022 Goals

- Continue leadership succession planning
- Increase AONN+ Midyear and Annual conference attendance
 - Tactics:
 - ✦ Continue strong market plan
 - ✦ Develop diverse and comprehensive conference agenda with nationally recognized faculty
 - ✦ Market the Scholarship Fund and donations
 - ✦ Provide session for new attendees on "How to Maximize Your Conference Experience"
 - ✦ Raise visibility with oncology executives and administrators to address value of attendance for oncology team members

XII. ADVANCING THE PROFESSION – NATIONAL COMMITTEE UPDATES

Genetics and Genomics Committee

Mission: The mission of the Genetics and Genomics Committee is to empower and engage oncology nurses and patient navigators to play a role in linking patients and personalized medicine, with the ultimate goal of increasing access to genetic information for the purpose of shared decision-making.

Co-Chairs:

Jennifer Klemp, PhD, MPH, MA
jen@jenklemp.com

Frank dela Rama, RN, MS, AOCNS, AGN-BC
fdelarama@gmail.com

2021 Accomplishments

- Two general session presentations at Annual Conference
- Presented a Facebook Live event for AONN+
- Added 2 new committee members
- Continuing program development for the BRIDGE Program: Building Relationships in Developing Genetic/Genomic Education Initiative

2022 Goals

- Collaborate with the other AONN+ committees – complete focus group in collaboration with Technology and Innovation Committee
- Offer conference sessions for upcoming Midyear and Annual conferences with Conference
- Planning Committee
- Present at least 1 more joint AONN+/NSGC webinar during 2022
- Collaborate with nursing leaders and industry partners to further develop the BRIDGE program
- Tools for patient and provider education
- Explore other educational opportunities
- Publish at least 1 more article in *JONS*

Community Outreach, Prevention, & Early Detection Committee

Mission: The mission of the Community Outreach, Prevention, & Early Detection Committee is to advance the role of navigation within the care continuum of those at risk, prevention, screening, early detection, and early-stage treatment.

Chairs:

Andrea (Andi) Dwyer
Andrea.Dwyer@cuanschutz.edu

Kim Parham, RN, BSN, CN-BN
kim.parham@thynkhealth.com

2022 Goals

- Recruitment of committee members
- Share best practices of the community outreach, prevention, and screening program

XIII. HEADING THE CHARGE – AONN+ LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

AONN+ Leadership Council



Sharon Gentry, MSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, AOCN, CBCN
Program Director
Academy of Oncology Nurse & Patient Navigators (AONN+)



Christian G. Downs, JD, MHA
Executive Director, Association of Community Cancer Centers
Rockville, MD



Jennifer R. Klemp, PhD, MPH, MA
Founder/CEO, Cancer Survivorship Training, Inc.
Associate Professor of Medicine
Division of Clinical Oncology
Director, Cancer Survivorship
Co-Program Leader Cancer Prevention and Survivorship; The University of Kansas Cancer Center; Kansas City, KS



Cheryl Bellomo, MSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, OCN
Oncology Nurse Navigator
Intermountain Cancer Center
Cedar City Hospital
Cedar City, UT



Linda Fleisher, PhD, MPH, HON-OPN-CG, HON-OPN-CG
Associate Research Professor – Health Disparities & Health Communication
Co-Director Geographic Management Program (GMAP)
Region 4; Co-Lead, NCI Cancer Center Cessation Initiative (C3I); Fox Chase Cancer Center
Philadelphia, PA



Vikas Mehta, MD, MPH, FACS
Head and Neck Surgical Oncologist
Associate Professor, Otolaryngology/
Head and Neck Surgery
Montefiore Medical Center
Albert Einstein College of Medicine
Bronx, NY



Jennifer Bires, MSW, LICSW, OSW-C
Executive Director, Life with Cancer and Patient Experience
Inova Schar Cancer Institute
Annandale, VA



Elizabeth Franklin, PhD, MSW
Senior Director, Policy & Advocacy
Cancer Support Community
Washington, DC



Zarek Mena, OPN-CG
Women's Health Program Manager
Whittingham Cancer Center/MSK
Physicians at Norwalk Hospital
Norwalk, CT



Linda Burhansstipanov, DrPH, MSPH
Founder, Native American Cancer Research Corporation
President, Native American Cancer Initiatives, Incorporated
Pine, CO



Rani Khetarpal, MBA
Head, Value Based Care (VBC) Partnerships, CVS Health
Brea, CA



Mandi Pratt-Chapman, MA, PhD, HON-OPN-CG
Associate Professor, Department of Medicine, School of Medicine & Health Sciences
Associate Professor, Department of Prevention & Community Health
Milken Institute School of Public Health
Associate Center Director, Patient-Centered Initiatives & Health Equity, George Washington Cancer Center

AONN+ Leadership Council's Strategic 2-, 3-, and 5-Year Goals

Set in 2021 by the Leadership Council, these goals consider feedback from the AONN+ Member Survey, key AONN+ initiatives, and current/anticipated trends in navigation. Each goal is supported by multiple approaches and tactics.

2-Year Goals:

- Advance health equity through patient navigation capacity building
- Grow AONN+ commitment to membership's professional development by providing mentorship opportunities
- Support a sustainable navigation workforce
- Expand active membership annually

3-Year Goal:

- Clarify global relevance of navigation and how AONN+ fits

5-Year Goal:

- Improve research rigor and get JONS indexed in PubMed

XIV. ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL FOOTPRINT

Elevating the Role of Nutrition in Cancer Care

In 2019, the Abbott Nutritional Health Institute brought together oncologists, nurse navigators, dietitians, and researchers to develop multidisciplinary and multiorganizational consensus criteria for malnutrition screening in outpatient cancer centers. The initiative was launched to address the lack of consistent malnutrition screening in outpatient cancer centers using evidence-based recommendations. The aim is to reach a national consensus on the endorsement of methodology for malnutrition screening in outpatient cancer centers.

Led by the Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics, approximately 5,000 papers from approximately 100 sources have been collected and analyzed. **Meredith Smith**, BSN, RN, OCN, has been assisting in this process. The team's findings are currently under review, and organizational approval of the paper is expected in June, with publication and related education campaigns to follow.

Meeting the Needs of Disadvantaged Patients with Cancer Around the World

Of worldwide cancer deaths, 70% occur in countries in the low- to middle-income brackets. This realization has led to the formation of a global advisory committee, with representatives from 11 countries across 5 continents, united under the banner of the American Cancer Society's Building Expertise, Advocacy, and Capacity for Oncology Navigation (BEACON) initiative. Together, this committee, which includes AONN+ members, is working to address the disparities between high-income countries and low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).

In 2021, a patient navigation program development methodology and implementation toolkit was completed for use by health institutions and non-government organizations in LMICs around the world.

This methodology and toolkit contains practical, adaptable, and freely available resources—including downloadable video and audio clips, anecdotes from various countries implementing patient navigation, and educational infographics—to guide health institutions in designing, launching, refining, and sustaining locally appropriate patient navigation programs. It will also provide valuable support via questions and practical exercises, instructions, templates, worksheets, and curated examples of resources used by other patient navigation programs.

The toolkit will be bolstered by a Project ECHO® clinic, in which users can share and reflect on their experiences, encourage one another, exchange resources, and work together on problem-solving.

NNRT Explores Navigation's Role in Fighting Disparities

Despite the immense challenges caused by the pandemic, cancer doesn't stop. Thankfully, nor do the navigators and organizations who are a part of the National Navigation Roundtable (NNRT), including AONN+.

The Academy is represented by **Sharon Gentry**, MSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, AOCN, CBCN (NNRT Steering Committee, Workforce Development Task Group, Annual Planning Committee); **Linda Burhansstipanov**, DrPH, MSPH (Co-Chair, Workforce Development Task Group; Co-Chair, Public Awareness Committee); **Linda Fleisher**, PhD, MPH, HON-OPN-CG (Co-Chair, Public Awareness Committee, Evidence-Based Promising Practices Task Group); **Elizabeth Franklin**, PhD, MSW (NNRT Steering Committee, Policy Task Group); and **Emily Gentry**, BSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, OCN (Evidence-Based Promising Practices).

The NNRT Workforce Development Task Group developed a patient navigation COVID-19 survey to understand the extent navigation care had been disrupted during a national crisis. The survey focused on changes in the navigator's role, training provided related to COVID-19, educational needs, and working environments.

In addition to the pandemic, a broader light was shone on the extreme health disparities in this country. Every community felt the impact and was challenged to understand and address these disparities. Many NNRT members developed new materials and programs and focused on deeply exploring issues of race and discrimination to increase navigation's role in fighting disparities and supporting all patients, especially those who are underserved.

XIV. ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL FOOTPRINT

ACCC Deepens Resources for Patients and Navigators

AONN+ maintained an active role with the Association of Community Cancer Centers (ACCC) throughout 2021.

Its Education and Workforce task forces reviewed more than 75 resources for ACCC members in 2021, updated 13 of them, and added 43 more. Through the ACCC's Financial Advocacy Network tools and resources, the organization aims to empower providers to proactively integrate financial health into the oncology care continuum and help patients gain access to high-quality care. To that end, it unveiled a digital patient assistance guide, which provides access to the most up-to-date cancer medication assistance and reimbursement programs that are available.

In October, AONN+ partnered with the ACCC to explore and ensure effective practices for addressing the care variation in pharmacy dispensing across delivery systems. The outcome will be relevant resources for everyone's membership related to oncology pharmacy. **Clara Lambert**, BBA, OPN-CG, is AONN+'s representative on the project's committee.

The ACCC also embarked on the development of a health literacy eLearning course last year. The goal is to create an interactive curriculum that's specifically designed for oncology navigators. Once completed, the course will be available on the ACCC's eLearning platform.

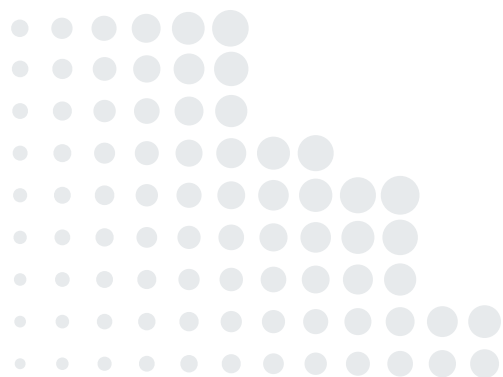
Also getting underway was the Personalizing Care initiative, which aims to offer guidance on how to tailor care for cancer patients of all backgrounds. It will ultimately complement the ACCC's implicit bias training, which is conducted in collaboration with the American Society of Clinical Oncology.

Clarifying the Standards of Professional Practice

The Professional Oncology Navigation Taskforce (PONT) is a collaborative of oncology professional practice associations that includes AONN+, the Association of Oncology Social Work, the Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses, the Oncology Nursing Society, and representatives of community-based patient advocacy organizations, the Cancer Support Community, and the Smith Center for Healing and the Arts. PONT members include select representatives of professional organizations relevant to navigation and individuals who served on the Biden Cancer Initiative Patient Navigation Working Group, which suspended operations in 2019.

AONN+ is represented by **Elizabeth Franklin**, PhD, MSW, and **Monica Dean**, HON-OPN-CG.

In 2021, the organization created standards to provide professional oncology clinical navigators and patient navigators with clear information regarding the standards of professional practice. This includes the knowledge and skills all professional navigators should possess to deliver high-quality, competent, and ethical services to people impacted by cancer. These standards also provide benchmarks for healthcare employers and information for policy and decision makers, as well as other health professionals and the public, to understand the role of professional oncology navigators.



XIV. ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL FOOTPRINT

AONN+ Participates in Pfizer Oncology's Patient Centricity Initiative

Launched in 2019, Pfizer Oncology's "Patient Centricity Initiative" aims to give patients with cancer, their advocates, and key opinion leaders a voice in how Pfizer Oncology designs and carries out its clinical trials and programs.

AONN+ is proud to have a role in this effort, and was asked to have representation on 3 Workstream Partners Groups that represent areas of focus for the near future:

- **Health Equity (Sharon Gentry, MSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, AOCN, CBCN, Program Director)** – focuses on the unmet needs of older people regardless of race, socioeconomic status, or location. The goal of this group is to identify ways in which Pfizer can address medical, policy, and societal challenges to help ensure older people living with cancer can equally benefit from advances in science and get the best care possible.
- **Health Literacy (Monica Dean, HON-OPN-CG, Director of Patient Navigation Program Development)** – focuses on providing feedback on Pfizer's "e-Health" literacy program as well as its ongoing Abstract Plain Language Summaries (APLS) initiative. APLS aims to involve patients in research, the development of patient-centered resources and learning opportunities, and to empower them with knowledge and the skills to engage in shared decision-making/care management.
- **Clinical Trials (Emily Gentry, BSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, OCN, Senior Director of Education and Program Development)** – focuses on near-term activities aimed at engaging patient insights and enhancing diversity in clinical trial participation.

Each of these groups met on multiple occasions in 2021 and, in part, identified areas of common ground between them, including improving diversity in clinical trials and health literacy among older adults. Advocate leaders have provided real-time input for several Pfizer patient-centric initiatives, including medicine administration and a newly launched clinical trial website.

AONN+ Launches a Sister Organization for Non-Oncology Navigators

In July, AONN+ Co-Founder **Lillie Shockney**, RN, BS, MAS, HON-ONN-CG, announced the Academy's intention to establish a new sister organization to AONN+ called the Association of Chronic & Complex Care Nurse Navigators. The impetus for the move was a survey of AONN+ members conducted over the previous year to assess how prevalent navigation services are in healthcare outside of oncology.

"The response was clear," Shockney wrote in the July issue of the *Journal of Oncology Navigation & Survivorship*, "there are nurses providing navigation services in a host of other areas—not just oncology. This realization prompted the formation of a committee to conduct a literature scoping review to investigate and analyze articles related to navigators working in various disease states."

Ensuring Navigators' Perspectives Are Heard at AVBCC Summit

AONN+'s **Sharon Gentry**, MSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, AOCN, CBCN; **Elizabeth Franklin**, PhD, MSW; **Monica Dean**, HON-OPN-CG; **Emily Gentry**, BSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, OCN; **Rani Khetarpal**, MBA; and **Christian Dean**, JD, MHA, presented at the 11th Annual Summit of the Association for Value-Based Cancer Care (AVBCC) in October.

Of the Academy's presence at the summit, Gentry said, "We are making progress, but oncology navigators need to have a louder voice in these meetings with stakeholders because, as patient advocates, they are often the keepers of patient experience."

"Navigators," she added, "have 'boots on the ground' experiences with patients with cancer, their families, and their caregivers, and oncology navigators are the professionals best suited to deliver these voices to the stakeholders who need to hear them."

XIV. ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL FOOTPRINT

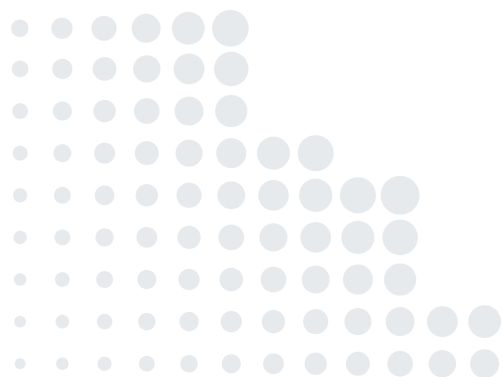
Empowering Through the Cancer Support Community

AONN+'s involvement in the Cancer Support Community, the largest professionally led nonprofit network of cancer support worldwide, manifested on several fronts in 2021.

Sharon Gentry, MSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, AOCN, CBCN, Program Director, served on a COVID-19 and Cancer Coalition, whose objective was to better understand the pandemic's continuing impact on those who are affected by cancer and formulate evidence-based solutions. **Margaret Rummel**, RN, MHA, OCN, NE-BC, HON-ONN-CG, discussed the psychosocial issues associated with living with multiple myeloma on the Cancer Support Community's podcast, "Frankly Speaking About Cancer." **Cathy Simmons**, RN, BSN, ONN-CG(T), represented AONN+ at a lung cancer patient advocacy summit. And **Emily Gentry**, BSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, OCN, was a presenter in the Cancer Support Community's workshop series titled "What's in Your First Aid Kit? Resources and Tools to Help You Survive and Thrive."

Influential Consortium Explores New Cancer Detection Technologies

In April, a group of leading public and private cancer-focused organizations formed the Multi-Cancer Early Detection (MCED) consortium. **Sharon Gentry**, MSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, AOCN, CBCN, Program Director, is representing AONN+ in the initiative, which is working to evaluate new technologies that have the potential to reduce cancer mortality by enabling earlier detection of cancer before it has spread, when treatment is potentially curative. The consortium is evaluating the clinical and public health value of MCED tests in earlier cancer detection and treatment and establish standards for their use in routine medical care.



XV. KEY PRIORITY ADJUSTMENTS FOR 2021

COVID-19 continued to present tremendous challenges for AONN+ in 2021. Within this section of our report, you'll learn about the ways in which AONN+ navigated this trying time and supported its members and their patients.

Learning to Spot the Visible and Invisible Signs of Compassion Fatigue

A proactive approach to self-care can be a means of professional growth for those working in a healing or helping capacity. It promotes personal well-being while minimizing the risk of compassion fatigue. The prevalence of compassion fatigue among oncology nurses, in particular, has been recorded as ranging from 8% to 38%.

At the 2021 AONN+ Midyear Conference, **Sharon Gentry**, MSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, AOCN, CBCN; **Monica Dean**, HON-OPN-CG; and **Emily Gentry**, BSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, OCN, presented a workshop titled "Caring for the Caregiver: Using a Tool to Increase Navigator Self-Awareness/Self-Examination Regarding Compassion Fatigue." Over 2 breakout sessions, the virtual navigation audience was offered an opportunity to assess the visible and invisible signs of compassion fatigue in a self-analysis using the Advisory Board Compassion Fatigue Assessment Tool. This tool, published by the Nursing Executive Center, consisted of 18 qualitative questions, equally divided between visible and invisible warning signs that could indicate a frontline healthcare professional is moving into the danger zone.

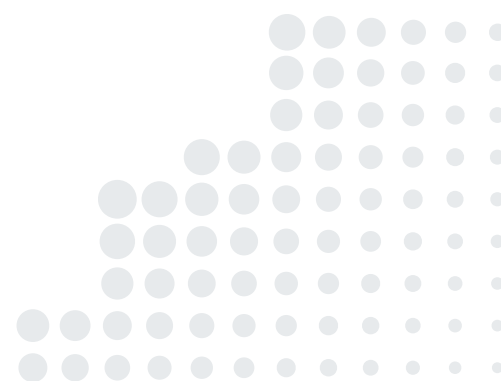
While the majority of the workshop's 119 participants indicated they were experiencing no visible signs of compassion fatigue, nearly half actually were suffering some measure of compassion fatigue, based on response to questions pertaining to invisible signs.

Regularly performing a self-assessment to identify the visible and invisible signs of compassion fatigue, while also pairing the self-assessment with a colleague's perspective, may help navigators address early signs of compassion fatigue.

The Critical Need for a Complete Cancer Team While Transitioning Out of the Pandemic

The AONN+ Leadership Council has been closely reviewing how the COVID-19 pandemic affected cancer care delivery in 2020. In a team effort led by **Christian Downs**, JD, MHA, Executive Director of the Association of Community Cancer Centers, with support from **Linda Fleisher**, PhD, MPH, HON-OPN-CG, HON-OPN-CG, Associate Research Professor-Health Disparities & Health Communication at Fox Chase Cancer Center; **Lillie Shockney**, RN, BS, MAS, HON-ONN-CG, Co-Founder of AONN+; **Rani Khertarpal**, MBA, Vice President of Provider Partnerships at New Century Health; and **Mandi Pratt-Chapman**, MA, PhD, HON-OPN-CG, Associate Center Director of Patient-Centered Initiatives and Health Equity for the George Washington Cancer Center, the Leadership Council devised how oncology service lines can remain strong and thoughtfully invest as they recover from the pandemic.

While our nation and healthcare system slowly begin to move out of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is critical that long-term investments made in our cancer delivery infrastructure are not cut out to address short-term financial stress. These long-term investments are critical to address the pandemic of inequities in the United States. This is particularly true as it relates to our cancer program navigators, social workers, and financial counselors, who are vital to our patients, their families, and their caregivers.



XV. KEY PRIORITY ADJUSTMENTS FOR 2021

Continuing to Make Certification More Accessible

In the ongoing absence of in-person conferences, and in response to the feedback from members, AONN+ Foundation for Learning (FFL) made the decision in 2021 to continue providing navigators with the opportunity to sit for the Oncology Nurse Navigator–Certified Generalist (ONN-CGSM) and the Oncology Patient Navigator–Certified Generalist (OPN-CGSM) certification exams at 1 of 5 regional locations in November. These locations included:

- New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania: Iselin, NJ
- Texas: Austin, TX
- Florida: Miami, FL
- Indiana: Indianapolis, IN
- North Carolina: Winston-Salem, NC

Achieving accreditation would not have been possible without the hard work of the AONN+ FFL team which includes:

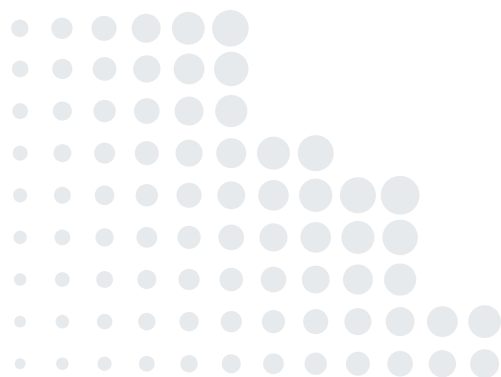
- Certification Advisory Commission
- ONN-CG and OPN-CG Scheme Committees
- ONN-CG and OPN-CG Exam Development Committees

Expanding Digital Offerings to Meet the Virtual Needs of Navigators and Patients

Digital content has long been a bedrock of AONN+’s educational efforts and was a focus of the 2021 strategic plan to promote across all of the Academy’s entities, especially in light of the ongoing pandemic. Throughout the year, AONN+ developed several digital initiatives that were launched in 2020 with the aim of connecting its members and safely bringing them the support and education they need at home or work.

Facebook Live was a significant avenue for this effort. Through its series, “Navigate Now: How Can We Help?,” AONN+ connected its leaders and faculty with key knowledge navigators in the community using Facebook’s familiar platform. During 12 events, navigators had the opportunity to engage with experts on a series of topics ranging from metrics and navigation models to advocacy in a virtual landscape and oncology care trends. Sessions were promoted in advance on AONN+’s website and social media channels. Following each live event, sessions were archived on the website for public availability and access.

Building on the successful launch of its podcast series, “Heart and Soul of Oncology Navigation,” in 2020, AONN+ released 13 new episodes in 2021. The monthly program features AONN+ leadership and members highlighting stories from the front lines, best practices, and lessons learned on the job reflective of the Academy’s 8 domains of knowledge. Topics covered last year included practical advice about pursuing evidence-based research, the specific needs of adolescent and young adult patients, and empowering patients through education, tools, and resources. Presentations are also archived on the website as a resource for navigators and support services.



XV. KEY PRIORITY ADJUSTMENTS FOR 2021

Sharon Gentry Named One of the 2021 PM360 Elite 100

In 2021, AONN+ Program Director **Sharon Gentry**, MSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, AOCN, CBCN, was named a *PM360* ELITE 100 in the Master Educators category. Now in its seventh year, the *PM360* ELITE (Exceptional • Leaders • Innovators • Transformers • Entrepreneurs) represent the most influential people in the healthcare industry today.

Sharon has been a voice of the AONN+ Leadership Council since its 2009 inception. From 2012 to 2019, she co-chaired the semiannual AONN+ conferences and actively served on the teams for certification, metrics, and acuity. She has written articles in peer-reviewed journals and patient advocacy magazines, authored book chapters, and travels nationally lecturing on navigation significance. Her work as Program Director continues to create opportunities for education, knowledge, and life-sustaining support—at exactly the time it is needed the most.

The *PM360* ELITE Awards were established in 2015 to recognize individuals who have made a significant impact on the healthcare industry throughout their careers. More than 500 submissions were received, and nominees were evaluated and selected by the *PM360* editorial staff based on their accomplishments; testimonials from their bosses, clients, and colleagues; and supporting evidence that reflects the impact of their efforts. A total of 100 winners were selected across 19 categories.

Presenting Educational Outcomes of Midyear Meeting

In an effort to assess the efficacy of the virtual platform as an educational tool for navigators, AONN+ conducted a survey-based study with Midyear Conference attendees.

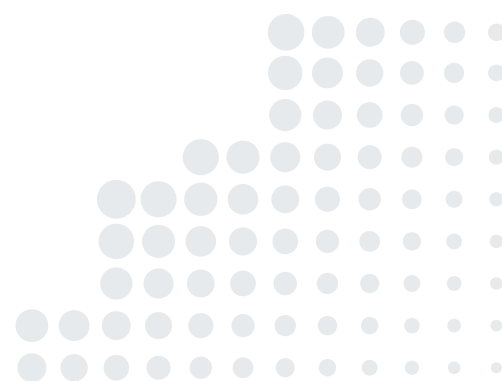
Prior to, immediately following, and 3 months after the event, registered participants were asked to complete a survey designed to gauge changes in their navigation knowledge and competence. Study leaders also assessed participants' navigation familiarity, years of experience, and awareness of navigation performance improvement initiatives and the associations between cancer and mental health.

Of the responses:

- 99% agreed or strongly agreed that their educational needs were met and incorporated active learning methods
- 100% agreed or strongly agreed that the educational materials were effective
- 67% stated in the 3-month follow-up survey that they made changes to their practice as a result of participating in the event

This study demonstrates that virtual learning formats enable all levels of personnel to interact, share best practices, build professional confidence, and learn care strategies that can result in changes to their current practice.

Results of this study, titled "Meeting the Educational Needs of Oncology Navigators to Navigate the Complexities of the Cancer Care Continuum via Virtual Format," were presented at an Independent Medical Education Poster Gallery Day, hosted by Eisai Inc., and held virtually in October. The study was led by **Sharon Gentry**, MSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, AOCN, CBCN; **Emily Gentry**, BSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, OCN; and **Monica Dean**, HON-OPN-CG.

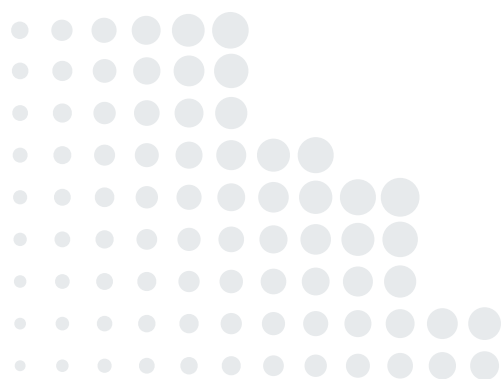


XV. KEY PRIORITY ADJUSTMENTS FOR 2021

A Year of Publications and Presentations

Throughout 2021, AONN+ members were very busy publishing and presenting original educational content. In October, **Monica Dean**, HON-OPN-CG, spoke on a panel at the American Cancer Society New England meeting about the Importance of Navigators in Light of COVID. **Sharon Gentry**, MSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, AOCN, CBCN, Program Director, added to this group's efforts in the following ways:

- "Nurse Navigators," an article in the April 2021 *Strategies* publication, featured Ms. Gentry discussing the evolution of the navigation profession and the role of this provider in the cancer care continuum.
- "The Journey of Oncology Navigation," written by Ms. Gentry, was published in the December e-edition of *American Nurse*, and discussed the value of navigation in increasing health equity, promoting coordinated care, and ensuring care quality.
- "Exploring the Value of Patient Navigation" was published in the Friday, July 30, 2021, edition of *MD News*. This article featured Ms. Gentry discussing steps being taken to provide navigators with clarification regarding the standards of professional practice. This is a significant step toward recognition as a labor code and opens the door for insurance coverage of the service. Ms. Gentry also touched on the need to invest in navigation rather than giving in to the temptation to cut it as a cost-cutting measure.
- A September *PM360 Online* article by Ms. Gentry, titled "Why the Nurse Navigator Is Essential to the Patient," discusses the difference between a nurse navigator and an oncology nurse and the value that navigators bring to the care continuum.
- During the virtual West Oncology Conference Updates for Advanced Practitioners and Nurses, Ms. Gentry presented on the Implementation of Nurse Navigation.



XVI. FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

AONN+ values the trust of its sponsors, partners, and members, and works diligently to ensure that all resources and funds are managed responsibly and in a way that will directly benefit members and the navigation profession at large.

Annual revenues—which are comprised largely of membership dues and sponsorships—allow AONN+ to develop educational materials and programming, build networks, and generate new knowledge and tools that navigators at all stages of their career need to grow professionally. A percentage of these revenues also sustain the infrastructure necessary to support AONN+'s robust offerings.

At all times, AONN+ strives to demonstrate the highest standards of accountability, effectiveness, efficiency, and transparency in its day-to-day operations.

A Venue for Knowledge and Engagement

AONN+ provides its corporate partners with a host of platforms through which they can engage and share new knowledge with oncology professionals and patients. These include:

- Qualitative and quantitative market research, including advisory boards, surveys, and focus groups
- Live events, including local meetings and webinars (either branded or unbranded), as well as annual and regional conferences with multiple sponsorship opportunities
- Steering committee, focus group, and advisory board management services (either single- or multistakeholder)
- On-demand resources, including web presentations and materials, and downloadable resources
- Marketing support through custom or repurposed patient education materials and unbranded nursing resources, as well as branded custom communications and nonclinical monographs

2021 Financial Overview

In 2021, AONN+ paired an effective financial management strategy with revenues from members and sponsors to grow its program portfolio. Annual revenues were increased by 67.66% in 2021, and AONN+ finished the year with 7 months of expenditures in reserve. The ratio of current assets (\$3,351,331) to current liabilities (\$1,345,991) is 2.49, slightly up from 2.30 last year.

AONN+ anticipates that the Academy will continue to flourish as the demand for navigators increases and the need for professional and educational resources grows.

OPERATING REVENUE 2021

Corporate Sponsorships and Membership Dues	\$4,787,493
Donated Services	\$190,950
Total	\$4,978,443

OPERATING EXPENSES 2021

Conference, Convention, Meeting	\$193,821
Freelance Projects, Digital, Production, Editing	\$355,272
Honoraria	\$304,811
Insurance	\$52,482
Management Fees	\$2,000,000
Advertising/Marketing Fees	\$2,021,235
Donated Services	\$190,950
PayPal & Bank Fees	\$3,643
Printing & Copying	\$17,024
Registration Processing Fees	\$9,288
Supplies	\$4,280
Travel	\$51,536
Total	\$5,204,342
Operating Profit (Loss)	\$225,899

Annual revenues were increased by 67.66% in 2021, and AONN+ finished the year with 7 months of expenditures in reserve. The ratio of current assets (\$3,351,331) to current liabilities (\$1,345,991) is 2.49, slightly up from 2.30 last year.

XVII. AONN+ PUBLICATIONS

Among the many benefits of AONN+ membership is access to the Academy's vast publication library. This wealth of printed and digital resources exists to serve members' varied needs—from enhancing their own knowledge base to providing valuable information and resources to help patients navigate through their cancer experience.

Our Publication Library Includes:

The *Journal of Oncology Navigation & Survivorship*® (*JONS*) features original research, best practices, case reports, and expert interviews that empower oncology nurses and patient navigators with the knowledge they need on the job. *JONS* also serves as a platform through which these professionals can share new knowledge and ideas. In addition to the print and online versions, highlights from the latest issue are e-mailed to AONN+ members twice a month. *JONS* print edition is circulated to more than 9,000 members while the digital edition is received by 10,300 members. www.JONS-online.com

CONQUER: the patient voice™ is the AONN+ premier forum for patients with cancer. *CONQUER* features articles written by and for patients with cancer, survivors, nurse navigators, and other oncology team members. This magazine addresses the issues that patients, their family members, and caregivers face every day in an easy-to-read format. Issues include interviews with patients with cancer, information on access to care, and articles on lifestyle topics such as nutrition, stress management, personal finance, and legal and employer issues. *CONQUER* also features patient stories that are nominated for the AONN+ Hero of Hope Patient Award, which is presented at the AONN+ Annual Conference. All stories are compiled in a special issue of *CONQUER* at the end of the year. *CONQUER* print edition is circulated to 145,000 individuals/organizations while the digital edition is received by 16,500 individuals/organizations. www.conquer-magazine.com

The Oncology Nurse-APN/PA® (*TON*) features articles written by and for oncology nurses, and specifically addresses the issues nurses and their colleagues face every day in clinical practice. Content includes news on the latest research findings, results of large clinical trials, interviews with thought leaders, articles of interest to student nurses, and lifestyle features (nutrition, stress management, personal finance, and communication/time management skills). Select issues offer a continuing education activity that readers can complete to earn free continuing education credits through industry partners. *TON* is circulated to 14,996 oncology nurses. www.TheOncologyNurse.com

CONQUER: the patient voice™ Named 2020 PM360 Pharma Choice Award Winner for DTC/DTP

PM360, a leading trade magazine for marketing decision makers in the pharmaceutical, biotech, medical device, and diagnostics industries, named *CONQUER: the patient voice* as the DTC/DTP Pharma Choice Gold winner in February.

Since 2009, the *PM360* Pharma Choice awards have served as the only industry awards to recognize outstanding achievement and creativity in healthcare marketing by allowing the industry as a whole to choose the winners. All submissions were placed online where anyone in the industry can vote for their favorites based on content, format, imagination, influence on the industry, and overall quality. This year, more than 8,000 votes were cast to decide the winners, which represents a new record high for the awards.

Fifth Annual Patient Guide to Cancer Support Services presented by *CONQUER: the patient voice*™

It is often said that the worst 3 words you can hear at a doctor's office are "you have cancer." The diagnosis is devastating not only because of the disease, but also due to the costs associated with the treatment. In March, *CONQUER: the patient voice* released its fifth annual "Patient Guide to Cancer Support Services" issue, which aims to help patients and their caregivers, nurse navigators, providers, and members of the multidisciplinary cancer care team become aware of the financial support services available to the patient. This guide is an easy-to-read, tabbed publication that ensures patients with cancer receive the best available treatment while alleviating some of their financial burdens.

Advancing Oncology Navigation and Care with Your Support

AONN+ would like to thank the following corporate sponsors and industry/alliance partners for their generosity and dedication throughout 2021. Your support was more important than ever this year as we pivoted to serve our mission despite the COVID-19 pandemic. With your ongoing help, we were able to continue improving patient care and quality of life by defining, enhancing, and promoting the role of nurse and patient navigators.

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