

# ONCOLOGY NURSE NAVIGATION

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## Disclosure

- I have no relevant financial relationships to disclose.

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## OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this lecture, participants should be able to:

1. Describe the role of the Oncology Nurse Navigator
2. Explain how the Oncology Nurse Navigator impacts the care/experience of the patient across the care continuum

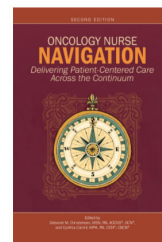
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## What is an Oncology Nurse Navigator?

- ONS definition of Oncology Nurse Navigator:

The Oncology Nursing Society defines an oncology nurse navigator (ONN) as “a professional RN with oncology-specific clinical knowledge who offers individualized assistance to patients, families, and caregivers to help overcome healthcare system barriers. Using the nursing process, an ONN provides education and resources to facilitate informed decision making and timely access to quality health and psychosocial care throughout all phases of the cancer continuum”. (1)

The first patient navigation program was created by Dr. Harold Freeman in New York City in 1990. The goal was to diminish the high breast cancer mortality rate in a population of poor African American women.



The ONS handbook on ONN, second version

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## Oncology Nurse Navigation

### Consistent point of contact early after diagnosis and throughout journey

Primary Care & Specialty Care Partnership  
 Diagnostic work-up  
 Patient and Family Education  
 Shared Decision Making  
 Assess and address barriers to care  
 Attendance at initial consults and ad hoc  
 Manage transitions in care  
 Prevention of Readmission  
 Prevention of unnecessary ED Visits

### Whole Person Care and Addressing Barriers to Care

Referrals/connections to:  
 Social Work  
 Cancer Rehabilitation  
 Oncology Dietitian  
 Genetics  
 American Cancer Society  
 Palliative Care  
 Support Groups  
 Financial Assistance  
 Spiritual Care  
 Community Resources

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## Benefits of Nurse Navigation

Navigation exists because it provides value to patients and their families. It has been documented in evidence-based literature that navigation (2,3):

- Facilitates timely access to care
- Helps overcome barriers to care
- Positively impacts patient care outcomes
- Supports coordination of the care for the patient through the entire cancer care continuum
- Improves patient outcomes through education, support, and performance-improvement monitoring
- Facilitates communication between patients, family/caregivers, and the healthcare team
- Helps lower patient distress
- Helps patients identify financial and other support resources
- Provides cancer program and community resources
- Coordinates care with the multidisciplinary team from the time of diagnosis throughout treatment
- Ensures education and access to clinical trials
- Enhances patient satisfaction

- ❖ Consistent point of contact
- ❖ There to educate, advocate, navigate and support (patients and their care circle)
- ❖ Follow across the entire cancer care continuum, from diagnosis through survivorship
- ❖ Focused on the effects of cancer on quality of life, whole person care approach

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## Breast Cancer Nurse Navigation

- Shared Decision Making for Early Stage Breast Cancer
- Body image
- Whole Person Care - Oncology Dietitian, Integrative Medicine
- Connect patients to community resources like peer navigation
- Length of relationship
- Spectrum of patient ages

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## ONN Standard Work

- **Cross continuum Oncology Nurse Navigation**
- **Project, Committees, Other**
  - Facilitate support group/s
  - Participate in the creation/updates to Patient Education Materials.
  - Participate in Allina Health Cancer Institute Program Committee Meetings.
  - Participate in Commission on Cancer Committee meetings, as appropriate by site.
  - Participate in community events, Allina Health events.
  - Special projects.
  - Advocate for quality. Highlight potential areas for quality improvement. Bring patient voice.
  - ONLC taskforce members – one NN will sit on each of the three taskforces
  - Serious Illness Conversation work (role in SIC follow-up call)

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# The Allina Health ONN team

AllinaHealth®

**Oncology nurse navigators**

An essential member of the cancer care team is the oncology nurse navigator. This individual is a registered nurse with oncology experience who works closely with the physicians involved in all facets of oncology care. Their primary role is to ensure seamless, high quality, well-coordinated care delivery. This is done in a complex environment that requires a multidisciplinary approach to ensure quality patient outcomes. Oncology nurse navigators are also focused on the effects of cancer on quality of life. They partner closely with patients and families throughout the cancer journey to provide support, education, and assistance to efficiently navigate the medical system, from diagnosis through treatment to follow-up. We encourage physicians to reach out to the oncology nurse navigators early after a patient has been diagnosed with cancer. The following is a directory of Allina Health oncology nurse navigators.

Allina Health Cancer Institute – Buffalo			
Name	Specialty	Phone	
Marcia Harrington, BSN, RN	General	763-684-7831	

Allina Health Cancer Institute – Cambridge			
Name	Specialty	Phone	
Jenny Strawn, BSN, RN	General	763-688-7988	

Allina Health Cancer Institute – Coon Rapids			
Name	Specialty	Phone	
Alexia Anderson, BSN, RN	Breast	763-236-5623	
Kristen Carlson, BSN, RN, OCN	Breast	763-236-8774	
Melanie Kwan, BSN, RN, OCN	Esophageal, Gastro, Head & Neck, Hematologic/Malignancy	763-236-6139	
Jessica Millard, BSN, RN, OCN	Colorectal	763-236-6135	
Lisa Ruddy, BSN, RN	Gastrointestinal, Hepatobiliary, Metastasis, Prostate, Sarcoma	763-236-5624	
Jill Wines, BSN, RN	Lung	763-236-7938	

Allina Health Cancer Institute – Fairbairn			
Name	Specialty	Phone	
Jessica Swanson, BSN, RN, OCN	General	887-487-9274	

Allina Health Cancer Institute – Hastings			
Name	Specialty	Phone	
TBD	General	651-454-1367	

Allina Health Cancer Institute – Minneapolis			
Name	Specialty	Phone	
Jessica Tavenor, RN	Gastrointestinal	612-863-5203	
Tricia Truak, RN, OCN	Hematologic/Malignancy	612-863-1317	

Judy Ellen, BSN, RN, OCN	Lung	612-863-4485
Jill May, BSN, RN, OCN	Immunotherapy, Pancreas	612-863-7387
Suzanne Monahan, BSN, RN	Head & Neck, Metastasis, Sarcoma	612-863-0847
Karen Nelson, BSN, RN, OCN	Breast	612-863-0128
OCN		
Debra Powers, BSN, RN	Colorectal	612-863-3889
Amelia Thibault, MSN, RN	Esophageal, Gastro	612-863-4443
Jessica Tronick, BSN, RN, OCN	Breast	612-863-4455
Amy West, MSN, RN, OCN	Breast	612-863-8832

Allina Health Cancer Institute – New Ulm		
Name	Specialty	Phone
Susan Gerlach, BSN, RN	General	507-274-6100

Allina Health Cancer Institute – Plymouth		
Name	Specialty	Phone
Megan Surly, MSN, RN, OCN	Breast	763-577-7386

Allina Health Cancer Institute – River Falls		
Name	Specialty	Phone
Amy Geronemus, BSN, RN, OCN	General	715-337-6446

Allina Health Cancer Institute – Saint Paul			
Name	Specialty	Phone	
Carrie Czech, BSN, RN, OCN	Breast	651-241-8112	
Michelle Estroff, BSN, RN	Gastrointestinal, Head & Neck, Hematologic/Malignancy	651-241-7148	
Brenda Kutz, BSN, RN, OCN	Lung	651-241-7166	
Leanne Schultz, BSN, RN, OCN	Breast	651-241-7143	
Jessica Steinhilber, BSN, RN, OCN	Gf Malignancy, Metastasis, Sarcoma	651-241-7194	

Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute (Minneapolis)		
Name	Specialty	Phone
Corale Branna, BSN, RN	Cancer Rehabilitation	612-863-6216

Givens Brain Tumor Center (Minneapolis)			
Name	Specialty	Phone	
Heather Ede, BSN, RN	Neuro-Oncology	612-863-1600	
Karen Hammarsh, BSN, RN	Neuro-Oncology	612-863-5382	
Elaine Kavanagh, BSN, RN, OCN	Neuro-Oncology	612-863-9531	

St. Francis Cancer Center (Shakopee)		
Name	Specialty	Phone
Kelly Kauten, BSN, RN, OCN	General	952-428-2836

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# What does Oncology Nurse Navigation mean to:

## Primary Care Providers

- “I had a patient recently with an abnormal CT finding, and I was not sure who was the appropriate referral. [ONN name] helped guide me to the correct referral, changed the order as needed, discussed the plan with the patient and the appropriate specialist and got the plan scheduled. I know this patient is in good hands, and this started with [ONN name]. Thank you!”
- “[ONN name] does an amazing job helping patients navigate a new cancer diagnosis and also helping primary care providers, such as me, get patients connected into oncology services quickly. I just saw a patient this morning overwhelmed by a new cancer diagnosis but so happy with how quickly she is getting needed appointments, imaging and more. She said to me, “I don't need to worry about anything because I have [ONN name]!” Thank you for showing so much care to each patient and for your professionalism.”

Allina P2P app > Specialty Providers > Oncology Nurse Navigators

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## What does Oncology Nurse Navigation mean to:

### Multidisciplinary colleagues

- “Applauding your follow through on an ER positive breast cancer patient that almost slipped through the cracks & missed getting a medical oncology referral. So appreciative of you following up with the surgeon & the patient & coordinating with our schedulers to get this patient seen. We're so happy you're here!”
- “[ONN name] showed an immense amount of compassion and KINDness by visiting her patient during a difficult and lonely hospital stay. Family visitors were not allowed, so he was alone. I am certain it was the bright spot in the patient's day to know that he matters so much to her. This is just one of the many acts that many acts that [ONN name] does often. She is a real tribute to the Nurse Navigation role!!”

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## What does Oncology Nurse Navigation mean to:

### Patients and their care circle members

- “I felt cared for and comforted by everyone I interacted with. The surgeon and nurse navigator provided excellent education and instruction. They really took the time to make sure that I was well taken care of. Even though having a new cancer diagnosis is scary, this visit made me feel much less scared. Thank you!!”
- “Without the involvement of my excellent Nurse Navigator, I don't know how I would have gotten through the experience.”
- “[ONN name] went the extra ten miles to be always available to answer my questions, coordinate appointments, and smooth out bumps in the road...”
- Wow, such comprehensive notes! These are what I wish I could see from every medical professional we visit—plain English and very easy to understand. You are a valuable member of your team which gives us great confidence when making our decision. We look forward to working with all of you.
- 
- Thanks so much for your efficiency!

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## Oncology Nurse Navigation video on allinahealth.org

- [Oncology nurse navigation | Allina Health](#)

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## Please feel free to CONTACT ME

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