

Update to 2019–2022 ONS Research Agenda: Rapid Review to Address Structural Racism and Health Inequities

Randy A. Jones, PhD, RN, FAAN, Rachel Hirschey, PhD, RN, Grace Campbell, PhD, MSW, RN, CNL, CRRN, FARN, Mary E. Cooley, PhD, RN, FAAN, Robin Lally, PhD, RN, AOCN®, FAAN, Darryl Somayaji, PhD, MSN, CNS, CCRC, Erik K. Rueter, PMP, PMI-ACP, and Mary Magee Gullatte, PhD, RN, ANP-BC, AOCN®, LSSYB, FAAN

PURPOSE: The Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) formed a team to develop a necessary expansion of the 2019–2022 ONS Research Agenda, with a focus on racism and cancer care disparities.

METHODS: A multimethod consensus-building approach was used to develop and refine the research priorities. A panel of oncology nurse scientists and equity scholars with expertise in health disparities conducted a rapid review of the literature, consulted with experts and oncology nurses, and reviewed priorities from funding agencies.

RESULTS: Critical gaps in the literature were identified and used to develop priority areas for oncology nursing research, practice, and workforce development.

SYNTHESIS: This is the first article in a two-part series that discusses structural racism and health inequities within oncology nursing. In this article, three priority areas for oncology nursing research are presented; in the second article, strategies to improve cancer disparities and equity and diversity in the oncology workforce are described.

IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH: Research priorities are presented to inform future research that will provide methods and tools to increase health equity and reduce structural racism in oncology nursing practice, research, education, policy, and advocacy.

KEYWORDS research priorities; structural racism; inclusion; health equity and inequity; cancer care
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The goal of this article is to use the rapid review methodology (Hamel et al., 2021) to disseminate research priorities to guide future oncology nursing scholarship, research, education, practice, healthcare policy, and advocacy related to racism and cancer care disparities. The resulting priorities, which supplement the 2019–2022 Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) Research Agenda (Von Ah et al., 2019), introduce research priorities for knowledge discovery, translational research, and policy analysis. ONS, during its 40-plus-year history, has been committed to providing oncology nurses—practitioners, educators, scientists, and other oncology partners—with evidence-based, practical, and educational resources to grow and strengthen the science of nursing and improve cancer care outcomes. This dedication is explicitly stated in the ONS mission to promote excellence in oncology nursing and quality cancer care and the organization’s vision to lead the transformation of cancer care. For the past 19 years, nursing has been ranked as the most trusted and ethical profession in the United States (Nurse.org, 2021). Combining this distinction with ONS’s history of promoting excellence and transformation, ONS is uniquely situated to address racism in cancer care.

Background

ONS is reaffirming its commitment to creating and sustaining a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion in oncology nursing science. Acknowledging that historical initiatives are not enough, ONS recognizes the need for intentional strategies to mitigate gaps in racial and health inequities. There is a critical need to understand and address the immediate