The purpose of the Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) Oncology Nurse Navigator Role Delineation Study was to examine the job-function activities of the oncology nurse navigator, thus providing an understanding of this unique role. The Role Delineation Advisory Committee consisting mainly of oncology nurse navigators was formed to provide content expertise to Applied Measurement Professionals, which conducted the role delineation study. Three hundred and thirty nurses completed the survey. The study clearly defined tasks, knowledge areas, and skills that are very specific to the nurse navigator role; however, the overlap in knowledge with the general oncology nurse role needs to be explored. The ONS Board of Directors and the Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation Board of Directors currently are exploring the need for additional initiatives to help define the role and competencies of the oncology nurse navigator.

Historically, the Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation (ONCC) has conducted role delineation studies to define the responsibilities of a particular role in oncology nursing, as well as the knowledge necessary for competent job performance in that role. Following the first OCN® certification examination in 1986, the first role delineation study was conducted in 1989 to ensure that the certification examination was a reflection of nurses’ knowledge and ability to apply that knowledge in practice. The results were used to assess the content validity of the OCN® credentialing examination, administered by ONCC, as well as examine how the content related to job function and provide input for future test questions (McMillan, Heusinkveld, Chai, Miller Murphy, & Huang, 2002). Since 1989, role delineation studies have been conducted for all of the ONCC certification programs at least every five years as a means to maintain a strong representation of current oncology nursing knowledge and practice on the ONCC examinations, as well as establish content validity for the certification programs.

To have a unique interpretation and function of the role of the OCN®, the Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) Oncology Nurse Navigator Role Delineation Study was to examine the job-function activities of ONNs, thereby providing an understanding of this new role.