

Oncology Nurse Participation in Survivorship Care

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Oncology nurses play an important role in the provision of survivorship care. Using report recommendations from the Institute of Medicine, nurses provide quality cancer care based on the specific characteristics of individual healthcare settings and the populations they serve. As part of the planning process, the evaluation of a setting's resources and goals for desired survivorship activities can make the difference between success and failure. Collaborating with local and national resources for cancer survivors can help expand a setting's services in an efficient and cost-effective manner. Models of care vary, and resources and communication differ among settings; as a result, survivorship care changes across models. Nurses are critical to implementing survivorship activities and facilitating communication among healthcare providers, patients, and caregivers. In addition, nurses significantly contribute to the dissemination and coordination of information between patients and healthcare providers.

The American Cancer Society ([ACS], 2009) predicted that the population of cancer survivors in the United States will be 20 million by 2020. Cancer survivors' healthcare needs are unique and involve specific cancer prevention and detection activities, individual surveillance recommendations, interventions for the consequences of cancer and cancer treatment, and coordination of care. Planning and coordinating those needs involve communication between patients and healthcare providers based on individualized treatment summaries and survivorship care plans.

Oncology nurses have been instrumental in developing and integrating cancer survivorship care into current healthcare settings (Ferrell & Winn, 2006). One hundred and two oncology nurses participated in the National Cancer Institute (NCI)-supported Survivorship Education for Quality Cancer Care program (Grant, Economou, Ferrell, & Bhatia, 2007). This article reports examples of oncology nurses who attended the program and have implemented cancer survivorship care in their settings. The article also briefly defines recommendations for survivorship care, describes the content of the Survivorship Education for Quality Cancer Care project, and provides examples of how nurses are implementing survivorship care in their specific cancer settings. The authors

At a Glance

- ◆ The concept of cancer survivorship is multifaceted and interdisciplinary.
- ◆ Oncology nurses will continue to educate and coordinate multidisciplinary teams on cancer survivorship care.
- ◆ Activities for meeting the needs of cancer survivors vary depending on the institution and available resources.

conclude with recommendations for survivorship care activities for all oncology nurses. The goal of this content is to inspire oncology nurses to join in providing quality survivorship care for all patients with cancer.

Background

The cancer survivorship movement began with the establishment of the National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship (NCCS) in 1986 and the recognition of cancer survivors as a unique

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