



APPLIED MEASUREMENT PROFESSIONALS, INC.

A Role Delineation Study of the Pediatric Oncology Nursing Professional

Conducted for the
Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation

Prepared by:

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and

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this study was to identify the responsibilities of professionals in pediatric oncology nursing as a first step in the development of a job-related certification examination. The Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation (ONCC) requested the services of Applied Measurement Professionals, Inc. (AMP) to design and conduct a study which would provide the support necessary to develop specifications upon which a content valid certification examination could be built. The ONCC identified the need to ensure that the examination specifications would be representative of professionals in pediatric oncology. Additionally, the ONCC used the role delineation process to investigate whether hematology nursing should be considered a part of the practice of pediatric oncology nurses.

The ONCC Pediatric Oncology Nurse Role Delineation Advisory Committee (AC) worked to conduct the activities necessary to identify pediatric oncology nurses' responsibilities and develop examination specifications. The diversity of this group was reflective of the specialty areas within pediatric oncology nursing, and all committee members had demonstrated expertise in their respective areas of specialization.

The study involved development of a role delineation survey, distribution of that survey to practitioners, and an analysis of the responses. Examination specifications for the pediatric oncology and hematology nurse were developed on the basis of these data.

The AC met during February 2008 to initiate the following six tasks:

1. Develop a sampling plan
2. Identify tasks for the survey instrument
3. Identify knowledge statements for the instrument
4. Identify classifications of core tasks and knowledge statements
5. Determine the rating scales
6. Determine the relevant demographic variables of interest
7. Integrate demographics, rating scales, and tasks into a survey instrument

A total of 1,839 e-mails containing a link to the online role delineation survey were sent to pediatric oncology and hematology nurses. After adjusting for undeliverable addresses and other invalid responses, the 520 usable responses represented a return rate of approximately 32%. The responses to the demographic questions indicated that there were sufficient numbers of respondents in relevant groups for subsequent analysis. Approximately 98% of the respondents indicated that the role delineation survey at least adequately addressed the responsibilities of the pediatric oncology and hematology nursing profession. In addition, respondents used all rating scales with an acceptable level of reliability.

During a second meeting of the AC in July 2008, decision rules were adopted and used to determine which tasks were appropriate for assessment, and therefore for inclusion in the final detailed content outline. Application of the decision rules resulted in retention of 61 tasks and 109 knowledge statements. It was determined that a total of 125 multiple-choice items would be sufficient to assess the knowledge required for safe practice as a pediatric oncology nurse.

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to identify the responsibilities of professionals in pediatric oncology nursing as a first step in the development of a job-related certification examination. The Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation (ONCC) requested the services of Applied Measurement Professionals, Inc. (AMP) to design and conduct a study which would provide the support necessary to develop specifications upon which a content valid certification examination could be built. Additionally, the ONCC used the role delineation process to investigate whether hematology nursing should be considered a part of the practice of pediatric oncology nurses.

The title of this study includes the use of the term role delineation study. However, other equally appropriate terms could be used to describe this study, for example, job analysis or practice analysis. While there may be some subtle differences, but for purposes of this report these three terms could be considered synonymous. Job analysis is the traditional technical term that is consistent with traditional standards of practice used to describe validation procedures for certification examinations. Practice analysis is a more contemporary term that is sometimes used to suggest that the focus of a study is broader than a single job and is often applicable for health care professionals or other job incumbents who are considered to be in a practice. A role delineation study (RDS) also suggests breadth of focus; however, the term role delineation has sometimes been used to describe a strictly judgmental process that does not make use of the data collection methodology used in the present study. Again, the terms may be used interchangeably within this report, and it should be emphasized that the RDS methodology used in this study did have the shortcomings sometimes associated with that term.

The ONCC Pediatric Oncology Nursing Role Delineation Advisory Committee (AC) conducted the activities necessary to identify responsibilities of pediatric oncology nurses and develop examination specifications. The members of the AC were reflective of the pediatric oncology nursing profession in all relevant respects, for example: geographic location, professional area, level of responsibility, educational background, gender, and work setting. The composition of the AC is shown in Table 1.

Table 1
ONCC Pediatric Oncology Nursing Practice Analysis Advisory Committee

Ruth E. Landers, RN MSN CPNP CPON [®] ; Chair
Karla Wilson, RN, MSN, FNP-C, CPON [®] ; Co-Chair
Christina M. Allegretti, RN, CPNP CPON [®]
Amy Eichenlaub, RN, CPON [®]
Heide A Elliott, RN, CPON [®] OCN [®]
Lauri Linder, PhD(C), APRN, CPON [®]
Lynda N. Martinez-Cardo, RN, BSN, CPON [®]
Maureen Sanders, RN, CPON [®]
Caryl Shelton, RN, BSN, CPON [®]
Stephanie Y. Skinner, BSN, RN, CPON [®]
Jennifer M. Spencer, MSN, CPNP, CPON [®]
Leticia Valdiviez, RN, MSN, CNS, CPON [®]
Julia Katherine Youngblood, RN, BSN, CPON [®]
Christine S. Yun, MSN, RN, CNS, PNP, CPON [®]

Two members of the ONCC staff should be noted because they provided invaluable contributions to the project: Cynthia Miller Murphy RN, MSN, CAE, ONCC Executive Director and Annette M. Parry Bush, RN, BSN, MBA, OCN[®], ONCC Certification Programs Manager. In addition, the contributions of Emma Nguyen, MS are acknowledged as she provided support for the project while serving as a Research Associate at AMP. The project team at AMP is grateful to these all of these individuals for their guidance and expertise, as well as the time committed to this project. Without the effort and expertise of the AC and the ONCC staff, this project would not have been accomplished.

For purposes of this study, the ONCC defined the target practitioner as follows:

“The Certified Pediatric Oncology Nurse (CPON[®]) candidate is a registered nurse with at least one year of recent experience with a minimum of 1,000 hours of pediatric oncology nursing practice, which may include hematology. In addition, the CPON[®] is expected to have recent continuing education in oncology and hematology nursing.”

As will be explained in more detail later in this report, the Advisory Committee (AC) examined the results of the survey to gauge the extent to which hematology practice was a part of the respondents' overall practice. Although substantial variation was seen among the survey responses, hematology practice was seen to comprise a substantial part of the overall practice of the target practitioner. The consistent significance of tasks and knowledge statements regarding hematology practice led the AC to recommending renaming the CPON[®] program to Certified Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurse (CPHON).

In the next section of this final report, the methodology of the study is discussed. In particular, the design of the survey instrument is described, including the method of defining tasks, knowledge statements, rating scales, and demographic questions. Also discussed in the methodology section is the sampling plan and distribution of the survey. The results section of this report discusses the respondents and their demographics, the adequacy of the instrument, and a summary of the responses. The final section of this report discusses the development of the test specifications based on these data. Several appendices provide details used to substantiate the discussion.