

Role Delineation of the OCN® Certification Examination

Conducted on behalf of



Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation

Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation

**125 Enterprise Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15275**

by

Manfred M. Straehle, MA

**Prometric
2000 Lenox Drive
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648**

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EXECUTIVE REPORT

The Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation (ONCC), an organization with the mission “to promote and provide oncology nursing certification for the enhancement of patient care and professional practice,” commissioned a role delineation study from Prometric for the Oncology Certified Nurse (OCN®) Certification Examination.

A role delineation is designed to obtain descriptive information about the tasks performed in a job and the knowledge needed to perform those tasks. The purpose of the role delineation was to:

- develop and validate the listing of the tasks and knowledge related to the work performed by Oncology Certified Nurses (OCN®s);
- develop test specifications for the OCN® certification examination;
- obtain useful information that can guide professional development initiatives; and,
- ensure that the ONCC has up-to-date information about expected changes in oncology nursing over the next few years.

Conduct of the Role Delineation

The role delineation consisted of several activities: survey development; survey dissemination; compilation of survey results; and test specifications development. The successful outcome of the role delineation depended on the expert opinion of thousands of OCN®s.

Survey Development

Survey research is an efficient and effective way to identify the tasks and knowledge that are important to the work performed by large numbers of professional OCN®s. The tasks and knowledge statements included on the survey covered the following content areas:

Tasks:

1. Health Promotion and Disease Prevention
2. Screening, Early Detection and Diagnosis
3. Scientific Basis for Practice including Research
4. Cancer Treatment Modalities
5. Symptom Management
6. Psychosocial Dimensions of Care
7. Oncologic Emergencies
8. Sexuality
9. Survivorship
10. End of Life Care
11. Professional Performance

Knowledge:

1. Health Promotion and Disease Prevention
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The development of the survey was based on information from a number of sources:

- The previous 2002 Analysis of Generalist Level Oncology Nursing Practice, the 2003 Advanced Oncology Nurse Role Delineation, and the 2003 Role Delineation for Certified Pediatric Oncology Nurse (CPON®) served as the primary resources for developing a listing of task and knowledge statements.
- A Task Force Committee comprised of OCN®s reviewed and, as needed, revised the list of tasks and knowledge validated in the previous role delineation study.
- OCN®s who had no previous involvement in the development of the survey reviewed a pilot version of the survey to ensure that the instrument was clearly written and comprehensive in content.

Survey Content

The survey, disseminated in May 2007, consisted of five sections: Section 1, Background and General Information; Section 2, Tasks; Section 3, Knowledge; Section 4, Recommendations for Test Content; and Section 5, Comments.

Results

Survey Response Rate

Of the 16,470 certified OCN®s who were invited to participate in the survey, a total of 5,286 (32.09%) submitted completed surveys. To encourage survey participation, respondents were eligible to enter a drawing if they completed the survey. Ten respondents who completed the survey were randomly selected to win a \$100.00 gift certificate. In addition, respondents received five ONC PRO-Points toward recertification for completing the survey.

Based on the analysis of survey responses, a representative group of oncology nurses completed the survey in sufficient numbers to meet the requirements for statistical analysis of the results.

Profile of the Survey Respondents

The summary profile of survey respondents:

- Current Employment/Practice Setting: Staff Nurse (56.92%)
- Primary type of practice: Outpatient setting (63.87%)

- Primary type of patient population: Adults (92.13%).
- Highest Education: Bachelor's degree in nursing (43.90)
- Gender: Female (97.92%); Male (2.08%)

Survey Ratings

Participants were asked to rate the tasks and knowledge statements as follows:

Tasks:

Importance: How important is performance of the task in your current work role as an oncology nurse?

Response choices: 0=Of no importance; 1=Of little importance; 2=Of moderate importance; 3=Important; 4=Very important

Frequency questions were included in the symptom management and oncologic emergencies content areas within the task section of the survey. The frequency questions aimed to determine how often oncology nurses provided care for patients with specific symptoms, oncologic emergencies and the types of treatment modalities used. The response options were the same for both frequency sections.

Symptom Management:

- Frequency: How often did you directly or indirectly provide care to patients with the following during the past year?
- Frequency: How often did you directly or indirectly treat patients using the following treatment modalities during the past year?

Response choices: 0=Never/Rarely, 1=Occasionally, 2=Frequently

Oncologic Emergencies:

- Frequency: How often did you directly or indirectly provide care to patients with the following oncologic emergencies during the past year?
- Frequency: How often did you directly or indirectly provide care to patients who experienced oncologic emergencies using the following treatment modalities during the past year?

Response choices: 0=Never/Rarely, 1=Occasionally, 2=Frequently

Knowledge:

Importance: How important is each knowledge statement to ensure public health, safety, and welfare in your current work role as an oncology nurse?

Response choices: 0=Of no importance; 1=Of little importance; 2=Of moderate importance; 3=Important; 4=Very important

Content Coverage

Evidence was provided for the comprehensiveness of the content coverage within the content areas. If the tasks and knowledge within a content area are adequately defined, then it should be judged as being well covered. Respondents indicated that the content was adequately covered, thus supporting the comprehensiveness of the defined content areas.

Write in Comments

Survey respondents answered two open-ended questions about professional development and/or continuing education needs and expected changes in their work role.

- What additional professional development (including training and experience) could you use to improve your performance in the field of oncology nursing?
- How do you expect your job in the field of oncology nursing to change over the next few years? What tasks will be performed and what knowledge will be needed to meet changing job demands?

Test Specifications Development

In July 2007, a Test Specifications Committee was convened to review the role delineation findings and create the test content outline that will guide the development of the OCN® certification examination.

Summary

In summary, this study used a multi-method approach in identifying the tasks and knowledge that are important to the competent performance OCN®s. The role delineation process allowed for input from a representative group of OCN®s and was conducted within the guidelines of professionally sound practice.

The results of the role delineation can be used by ONCC to develop the OCN® certification examination and guide professional development initiatives.

