



certification/news

The Newsletter of the Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation
Volume XXX, Extra Election Issue

Voting for ONCC Board Position Now Open

Certified nurses began casting ballots for a nurse to join their leadership group when the Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation (ONCC) election opened on November 10. Have you voted yet? If not, see page 2 to learn more about the candidates.

Nurses who are ONCC-certified as of October 15, 2016 were sent an email with a link to their personal online ballot. All votes must be cast online. There are no paper ballots. The election email was sent from ONCC election administrator. If you haven't seen it, be sure to check your spam or junk mail folder, and add <mailto:noreply@directvote.net> to



your email contacts or safe senders list. A letter with voting instructions was mailed to nurses who do not have a valid email address on file, or who's email bounced back as undeliverable.

Voting will close December 22.

Nominating Committee Slates Two Candidates for Open Board Position

Two certified nurses have been slated by the ONCC Nominating Committee to fill one vacancy on the ONCC Board of Directors. These candidates include Andria (Angie) Caton (creds) and Clara Beaver (creds).

According to Nominating Committee Chair, Susan Bruce, MSN, RN, OCN®, AOCNS®, "These candidates are well-qualified to serve on the ONCC Board. They understand the concerns of certified nurses and some of the challenges facing certification boards. They have leadership experience and a passion for certification." Bruce went on to say,

"We're fortunate to have candidates of this caliber who are willing to serve. I hope all certified nurses will take the opportunity to vote."

In addition to Bruce, ONCC Nominating Committee members include Carl Brown, RN, PhD, AOCN®, FAAN, Marlon Saria MSN, RN, AOCNS®, FAAN, Rita Secola, RN, PhD, CPON®, FAAN, and Darla York RN, MSN, NE-BC, CPON®.

If you haven't voted yet, learn about the candidates on page 2, and watch your email for a reminder to vote.

Voting is Your Voice

Don't let election fatigue deter you from voting in the ONCC election this year. With the media spotlight shining brightly on the US election for months, the ONCC Board of Directors election can easily become lost in the noise. But here's why it shouldn't.

According to Huffington Post contributors Daniel Marans and Kim Bellware, "Voting is your voice." It's a meaningful way to support issues and individuals you think can best effect the changes you want to see.



But what if the candidates for a position appear to be equally qualified or have similar views? It's still important to make a choice, so your voice is heard.

The spotlight on the US national elections may have dimmed, but the ONCC Board of Directors election is just getting started. Use it as an opportunity to make your voice heard. Vote.

Reference:

Marans, Daniel and Bellware, Kim. 7 Reasons You Should Vote In This Year's Elections. February 19, 2016; updated August 11, 2016. www.huffingtonpost.com



Andria (Angie) Caton, BSN, RN, OCN®, CHPN

Community Education Nurse/Coordinator of Clinical Staff Development
Northeast Georgia Medical Center (Gainesville, GA)

Leadership Experience

- OCN® Test Development Committee, ONCC, Member 2011-2016, Chair 2015-2016
- Lanier Georgia Chapter of ONS, President 2004-2006, 2008-2010, 2016-2018
- Georgia Nurses Association Council of Nursing Practice, 2009-2013
- Georgia TEAM UP Task Force to Reduce Breast and Cervical Cancer Mortality, 2004-2009
- Northeast Georgia Medical Center, Clinical Educators Committee, Pain Team, Chair

How would you further the mission of ONCC?

My OCN® credential has provided more opportunities and opened more doors for me than any other event in my professional career. Maybe for some nurses, having the

OCN® credential is mandatory for employment or necessary for financial advancement, but for me, it was and is about being a part of a very special group of nurses who are dedicated to the professional values of providing exceptional patient care, striving for clinical excellence, and life-long learning. Many of these amazing OCN® nurses have shaped my clinical practice and nursing values since becoming an oncology nurse. Based on my experiences, I deeply believe that OCN® role models and mentors are necessary to lay the foundation of professional practice for novice oncology nurses.

Even with all the evidence and information about the benefits of certification, oncology nurses often feel that certification is out of reach for a variety of reasons. During my recent work as a member of the OCN® Test Development Committee, I had the opportunity to hear the concerns that nurses have about becoming certified. Some of the certification barriers for nurses are time to study, upfront costs of certification,

and the lack of financial incentives. By far, the most frequent concerns of nurses surrounding certification are fears of the exam and the fear of failing the exam. I believe there are unique opportunities to promote the ONCC mission by helping to improve the reputation of the exam and dispelling fears about the exam. Utilizing the most current evidenced-based approaches, implementation of interventions to address test anxiety and strategies like preparing for the exam using the test blueprint, study apps, and online mentoring programs may help nurses gain the skills and confidence needed to become certified.

In summary, I feel that I would best support the mission of ONCC by helping to advance professional practice through mentor support, inspiring novice oncology nurses at the local levels, encouraging partnerships with health care organizations to reduce financial obstacles, exploring innovative initiatives to help test takers, and as always, advocating for the specialty and the nurses that I love best.



Clara Beaver, MSN, RN, AOCNS®, ACNS BC

Manager, Clinical Nurse Specialist
Karmanos Cancer Center (Detroit, MI)

Leadership Experience

- AOCNS® Test Item Writer, ONCC, 2014
- ONS Clinical Nurse Specialist Community, Coordinator-Elect, 2015-Present
- *Clinical Journal of Oncology Nursing*, Reviewer, 2015-Present
- Integration Task Force, McLaren-Karmanos Cancer Center, Nursing Lead, 2014-Present
- Michigan Patient Advocacy Representative, 2016

How would you further the mission of ONCC?

Being a certified oncology nurse has been a professional goal of mine since I became an oncology nurse 18 years ago.

I have been continuously certified for 16 years and currently hold an AOCNS® certification.

As a board member for ONCC my mission is to promote the importance of certification to oncology nurses by working with ONCC and ONS to provide education about the value of certification. As an advocate for ONCC I have talked with groups of nurses to understand the barriers in working toward certification. Many state they are worried about taking the test because they don't have a lot of chemotherapy experience. My mission is to help ONCC work with these individuals to understand the test is not as "scary" as they have thought by using mentors of nurses who have recently taken and passed the exam.

While working with ONCC as a test item writer and passing score task force member we were told to think about what

a novice or new oncology nurse would need to know to be successful or minimally competent. I feel the general population of nurses who are looking to take this exam do not understand that concept and feel the test will be overwhelming and written toward more experienced nurses. I feel ONCC can help educate and support more nurses in certification by explaining this process more clearly to those nurses looking at certification.

My main mission as an ONCC board member would be to support oncology nurses who are interested in certification, but are worried about taking the exam. I have had many years of experience helping nurse prepare for the OCN® exam with a successful passage rate. I would use this experience to help ONCC reach out to oncology nurses and offer assistance in studying and taking the exam.