

The Role of Licensed Nursing Personnel in Radiation Oncology Part B: Integrating the Ambulatory Care Nursing Conceptual Framework

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Purpose/Objectives: To describe the professional opportunities for licensed nursing personnel in radiation oncology within the conceptual framework developed for ambulatory care nurses by the American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing (AAACN).

Data Sources: Published articles and books.

Data Synthesis: Using AAACN's framework, the researchers identified three roles that are part of every ambulatory care nurse's practice and can be readily customized to radiation oncology: an organizational/systems role, a professional role, and a clinical nursing role. Incorporating the described framework into a radiation oncology nurse's job description can lead to maximizing the use of the professional staff member within the radiation oncology department. This level of professional utilization and validation of the radiation oncology nurse will lead not only to improved patient outcomes but also to greater professional satisfaction, resulting in improved retention.

Conclusions: The complexity of oncology therapies demands expert oncology nurses. This clearly is recognized in medical oncology, and patients with cancer who are being treated with radiation are no less important. To optimize patient care and therapeutic outcomes, the integration of nursing in all aspects of the radiation treatment continuum is essential.

Implications for Nursing: Radiation oncology nursing is an evolving subspecialty. Nurses can use the information in this article to evaluate their current roles and individual potential for further professional growth.

Advances in radiation therapy technologies, including imaging, treatment planning and administration, and new systemic radioprotective and radiosensitive agents, have allowed radiation oncologists to expand treatment options for patients with cancer, resulting in more patients receiving therapy with curative intent. As a result, the role of the RN has evolved from that of clinical assistant to one of clinical expert in the evaluation and management of patients receiving radiation therapy. This evolution has been slow, and many nurses continue to provide "clinic care" and clerical assistance despite the opportunity and need to provide expert patient care. This article will explore the opportunities available for RNs in radiation oncology within the conceptual

Key Points . . .

- ▶ To optimize patient care and therapeutic outcomes, the integration of nursing in all aspects of the radiation treatment continuum is essential.
- ▶ The American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing conceptual framework is a useful tool that can be applied to the role of professional radiation oncology nurses and help define specific roles and responsibilities.
- ▶ Within the framework, three specific roles can be identified: an organizational/systems role, a professional role, and a clinical nursing role.

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Oncology nurses only require an active nursing license and experience. However, many nurses choose to earn post-graduate education in oncology nursing, whether that be a certificate or a graduate degree. Oncology nurses care for individuals, families, and communities, and the role has expanded to include many aspects of care: Cancer education and prevention. Screening. Part Eight Oncology Nursing Resources. Learn more about oncology nursing by searching the web and talking with nurses currently working in the field. Tap into social media, visit your local nursing school to chat with an advisor, and visit the websites of professional organizations for oncology nursing. Some of these organizations include: Oncology Nursing Society. Nursing responsibilities for the patient receiving radiation therapy Teletherapy The radiation source is exterior to the tumor such as the use of linear accelerator. 1. Remove all opaque objects such as pins, buttons and hairpins and replace clothing with a gown for body X-rays. 3. Tell the patient there will be no sensation or pain accompanying radiation therapy. 4. Advise the patient that he will be alone in the room for the protection of the technician, but will be in voice contact. 5. Determine from the physician what has been told to the patient about radiation therapy 6. If series of treatments are to be given, include the patient in the planning phase. Academic Medicine Acute Care Nursing Addiction Medicine Administration Advanced Practice Genetics Geriatrics Gynecologic Oncology Hand Surgery Head & Neck Surgery Hematology/Oncology Hospice & Palliative Care Hospital Medicine Infectious Disease Infusion Nursing Internal/General Medicine Internal/General Medicine Residency Library Sciences Maternal Child Nursing Medical Oncology Medical Research Neonatal/Perinatal Neonatal/Perinatal Nursing Nephrology Neurology Neurosurgery Nursing-administrative Nursing-all Specialties Nursing-education Nutrition & Dietetics Obstetrics & Gynecology Obstetrics & Gynecology Nursing Occupational & Environmental Medicine Oncol... Nursing Models and Theories: Do They Work in Practice?: PDF Only. Read our oncology nurse guide. Get an oncology nursing career overview and learn about nurse education and salaries. Read tips to help advance your nursing career. Oncology nurses work as part of a team with other cancer care providers and support staff. Their daily activities include the following tasks: Caring for patients diagnosed with cancer. Offering education and support to patients' families. Administering chemotherapy.