

POSITION SUMMARY

Oncology Nursing Society and Geriatric Oncology Consortium Joint Position on Cancer Care in the Older Adult

Most cancers are diagnosed in patients older than age 65, yet older adults with cancer are a medically underserved segment of the U.S. population. Older adults are less likely to be screened for cancer and, when a diagnosis is made, are less likely to be offered curative therapy or participation in clinical trials. As a consequence, older patients with cancer often experience diminished quality of life.

It is the position of the Oncology Nursing Society that ageism in cancer care, and research, education, and public policy that support it, be eliminated.

This includes

- Age measurement that moves beyond chronology to include biologic, functional, and personal dimensions of advanced age, ageing, and late life
- Older adults having full and equal access to cancer care from screening and diagnosis through treatment, rehabilitation, and palliation to survivorship, wellness, and end-of-life care
- Participation of older adults in clinical trials and increased research on appropriate health and social services for older adults with cancer.

ONS position summaries may be reprinted without expressed written permission from ONS providing that the original source is credited appropriately. For additional information, contact pubpermissions@ons.org. To access the full position, visit www.ons.org/publications/positions/documents/pdfs/geriatric2.pdf.

