

POSITION SUMMARY

Oncology Nursing Society Position on the Impact of the National Nursing Shortage on Quality Cancer Care

The United States is experiencing an unprecedented nursing shortage that is expected to continue well into the future. While the number of nurses entering the workforce decreases, the number of patients will increase, resulting in significant RN vacancies. Cancer care will be affected by the shortage as fewer nurses choose to be oncology nurses, a vital component of quality cancer treatment.

It is the position of the Oncology Nursing Society that efforts are made in the workplace environment, education, and public policy to address the nursing shortage and prevent a negative impact on the quality of cancer care.

These efforts should include

- Improvements in the nursing work environment, such as flexible work schedules, adequate compensation, and reentry programs for nurses who have been out of the workforce
- Encouragement of primary and secondary school students to become nurses and incorporation of oncology content in nursing school curricula
- Continued and additional federal support for loan repayment, scholarship programs, and nursing schools.

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