

POSITION SUMMARY

Oncology Nursing Society Position on Patient Safety

Despite national efforts to improve patient safety, barriers to progress include the culture and complexity of health care, continuing skepticism that system failures are the underlying cause of most healthcare errors, and fear of malpractice liability that inhibits the willingness to discuss or even admit errors. In the field of oncology, environmental factors, such as multiple individuals involved in the care of a single patient, the high acuity of patients with cancer, and the complexity of cancer treatment, impact patient safety. Oncology nurses hold a primary role in ensuring that patients are cared for in a safe environment.

It is the position of the Oncology Nursing Society that patients and their families receive safe care.

This includes

- Oncology nurses reporting medical and nursing errors in a timely and appropriate manner
- Patient safety programs at healthcare organizations that clearly communicate the importance of patient safety and include strategies for leadership, management, and workforce development
- A nonpunitive culture of safety to encourage healthcare providers to report errors
- Prompt disclosure of healthcare errors to patients and families.

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