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THE PROCESS OF ONCOLOGY NURSE PRACTITIONER PATIENT NAVIGATION: A GROUNDED THEORY APPROACH

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Nurse practitioner (NP) navigation, in general, has been shown to achieve cost effective quality care, while saving millions of dollars. Research though scant has shown that oncology nurse practitioner navigators' improve clinical outcomes. For purposes of this study, oncology NP (ONP) navigators are nurse practitioners with a certification in oncology who utilize navigation processes to care for cancer patients along any aspect of the cancer care continuum. Navigation process is defined as a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end. Development of process and outcome measures is critically important in that the development of these measures is necessary for navigator program evaluation. The purpose of the study is to answer the question: What processes do oncology NP navigators use in caring for cancer patients?

Methods: Twenty ONP navigators were interviewed though the use of a semi-structured interview utilizing grounded theory methodology.=

Conclusion: This resulted in a well-defined set of concepts and theoretical framework for the process of ONP navigation which lays the groundwork for program evaluation and role delineation.

Biography

Frances Mary Johnson has completed her PhD from Texas Woman's University; Masters' in Nursing from Boston University, and BSN from Fairfield University in Connecticut. She is an Oncology Nurse Practitioner at Carl R Darnell Army Medical Center in Fort Hood, Texas. She has published 5 papers and co-authored a book chapter on patient navigation. She has presented abstracts derived from this study at the 42nd and 43rd Oncology Nursing Society National Conferences pertaining to Carving the ONP Navigation Role, and Triage an Essential Component of the Navigation Process. She has worked as an Advanced Practice Nurse for 20 years, and worked in both primary care and oncology. Her areas of interest include chemotherapy, cancer survivorship, program development, patient navigation systems, as well as all aspects of hematology.

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