



ONCC News

The Newsletter of the Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation

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New Blueprint for 2008 OCN® Test

A new OCN® Test Blueprint, or test content outline, will form the basis of all OCN® examinations administered beginning in February 2008. The new blueprint is the result of the OCN® Role Delineation Study that ONCC conducted earlier this year, which included a survey completed by 5,286 oncology certified nurses. Survey results were used to identify the knowledge and tasks needed for certification in oncology nursing.

The new OCN® Test Blueprint addresses 11 major subject areas. The complete OCN® Test Blueprint, including the content sub-areas, can be found on the ONCC Web site at <http://www.oncc.org/getcertified/TestInformation/ocn/index.shtml> and in the *2008 Oncology Nursing Certification Test Bulletin*. The major subject areas and their percentage of test content are listed below.

- I. Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (5%)
- II. Screening, Early Detection, and Diagnosis (7%)
- III. Scientific Basis for Practice, Including Research (10%)
- IV. Cancer Treatment Modalities (15%)
- V. Symptom Management (22%)
- VI. Psychosocial Dimensions of Care (7%)
- VII. Oncologic Emergencies (10%)
- VIII. Sexuality (5%)
- IX. Survivorship (8%)
- X. End-of-Life Care (6%)
- XI. Professional Performance (5%)

ONCC Increases 2008 Test Dates, Offers International Testing

To make it more convenient than ever for nurses to become certified in 2008, ONCC has expanded its OCN® and CPON® test administrations to quarterly, month-long test windows. In addition, ONCC will continue to offer year-round testing for the AOCNP® and AOCNS® tests, beginning February 1, 2008. As a result, test candidates will have more options when choosing a test date.

ONCC certification tests will be offered at more than 230 Pearson Professional Centers. Although most Pearson Professional Centers are located in the United States

and Canada, ONCC will offer limited testing at select international sites. There will be an additional international test site fee of \$75 for candidates testing outside North America.

See the table below for the 2008 ONCC certification test dates and application deadlines. See the *2008 Oncology Nursing Certification Test Bulletin* or the ONCC Web site (www.oncc.org) for complete information, including eligibility criteria, test blueprints, reference lists, and application forms and fees.

2008 ONCC Certification Test Dates and Application Deadlines

OCN® & CPON® Test Dates	First Application Deadline (Save \$75!)	Final Application Deadline (Full Fee)
May 1–31, 2008	January 9, 2008	January 23, 2008
August 1–30, 2008	April 9, 2008	April 24, 2008
November 1–29, 2008	July 9, 2008	July 23, 2008

AOCNP® and AOCNS® Test Dates

Year-round tests beginning February 1, 2008. Allow four to six weeks to receive an Authorization to Test.

Apply online or learn more at www.oncc.org.

New Testing Agency to Administer 2008 Examinations

Candidates taking ONCC examinations in 2008 will find themselves testing in a new venue. ONCC's new testing partner, Pearson VUE, will offer ONCC examinations at more than 230 fully owned and operated Pearson Professional Centers. The Pearson Professional Centers have been specially
(See "Agency," page 2)

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Editor's Message

This Is YOUR ONCC News

Heather Mackey, RN, MSN, ANP, AOCN®

At the July ONCC Board of Directors meeting, the ONCC Board decided to return *ONCC News* to a printed and mailed publication for two of the four issues in 2008. The reasons behind this decision had to do with trends seen in the readership numbers following the conversion to an electronic format and information collected in the recent reader survey. The ONCC Board of Directors and the *ONCC News* Editorial Board believe strongly that this publication serves as a vital source of communication between ONCC and oncology certified nurses everywhere. We want readers to continue to receive information that they feel is important, timely, and of interest to their practice as oncology certified nurses. We also want to ensure that readers are able to access it in the format that they are most likely to read.

Throughout this edition of *ONCC News*, readers will find information on a variety of issues affecting oncology certified nursing practice. Those of you in breast care will be

particularly interested in the latest information on the breast care certification examination, which will be offered for the first time in 2009. We believe that everyone will be inspired by the activities and accomplishments of our CPON® of the Year, Joan O'Hanlon Curry, as well as those exemplified by the Children's Hospital & Regional Medical Center in Seattle, WA, which is profiled in our "Employer Spotlight." Be sure to read all about the candidates for the ONCC Board of Directors election, which began on November 1, and exercise your right to vote.

One of the topics in this issue about which the Editorial Board is most excited is the article on the "Tangible Benefits of Certification" on page 5. When we have had the opportunity to talk with nurses from across the nation about the benefits of certification, a common comment we hear is, "What's in it for me?" For some nurses, it is much more than the desire to demonstrate their mastery of specialized knowledge, or the desire for

personal and professional growth, or the belief that certification can improve the quality of care delivered to our patients. Certification certainly represents all of those factors. However, the financial costs and benefits of pursuing, obtaining, and maintaining certification also must be considered. We hope that this article will be the beginning of discussions to be held across work settings, geographical areas, and levels of practice on this important issue affecting oncology nursing certification today.

This is your *ONCC News*. Let us know what you need more or less of, what information of interest to you we're not covering, and how you are best able to use the information from the *News*. Over the next few months, we will be redesigning the *News* to better reflect the needs of our readers. The ONCC Board of Directors and *ONCC News* Editorial Board look forward to working with each of you to continue the *News* as the premier source of information on issues affecting oncology certified nurses.



Breast Care Certification Set for 2009

Mark Flitcraft, RN, BSN, OCN®

Beginning in 2009, ONCC will offer a certification examination for RNs specializing in breast care. Breast care practice may include nursing practice along the entire continuum of breast care from prevention and detection, diagnosis and treatment, to survivorship or end-of-life care. Those who pass the examination will be granted the Certified Breast Care Nurse (CBCN) credential.

The CBCN certification will have eligibility criteria of 1,000 hours of breast care practice within two and a half years prior to application and 10 contact hours of breast care continuing education within three years prior to application. Additionally, an unrestricted, current, and active RN license and a minimum of 12 months of experience as an RN within three years prior to application are required to take the examination.

Similar to other ONCC examinations, the CBCN examination will be a multiple-choice format and will include an examination blueprint with references to assist with examination preparation. The CBCN examination will cover the following specialty knowledge areas.

- I. Breast Health: Risk Assessment and Reduction, Screening, Early Detection (15%)
- II. Diagnosis and Staging (18%)
- III. Treatment Modalities: Local and Systemic (20%)
- IV. Symptom Management (17%)
- V. Psychosocial and Spiritual (8%)
- VI. Survivorship (8%)
- VII. End-of-Life Care (4%)
- VIII. Professional Performance & Education (10%)

Candidates for the CBCN credential will not need prerequisite certification. For more information on this important certification that will elevate the standard for professional nursing practice in breast care, please visit www.oncc.org/getcertified/testinformation/breastcare/index.shtml.

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designed to provide a carefully controlled, consistent testing environment to encourage peak test candidate performance.

Pearson VUE delivers more than 4 million high-stakes examinations annually in licensure, certification, academic admission, and regulatory and government testing service markets. Learn more about Pearson VUE at www.pearsonvue.com.

Have You Voted Yet?

Two candidates are running for one open position on the ONCC Board of Directors. The election opened on November 1, 2007—have you voted yet?



All voting will be completed online only. No votes may be cast by paper ballot. Nurses who were ONCC-certified as of

October 10, 2007, were sent an e-mail containing instructions and a password to access their personal ballots. Those who did not have a valid e-mail address on file at ONCC will receive a letter containing the instructions and password. All voting must be completed by December 7, 2007.

Information about the candidates is included on the ballot, and a brief biographical sketch of each candidate is listed here. Candidate information also is posted on the ONCC Web site at www.oncc.org/about/election.shtml. The order in which the candidates are listed was determined by computerized random selection. The can-

didates also appear in this order on the on-line ballot.



Susan Bruce, RN, MSN, OCN®

Clinical Nurse IV—Medical Oncology
Duke Raleigh Hospital
Raleigh, NC

Leadership Experience

- OCN® Test Item Writer, 2002
- OCN® Review Course Planning Committee, Member, Duke University Health System, 2006
- *ONS Connect*, Review Board Member, 2003–2007
- ONS Evidence-Based Practice Education Group, Team Member, 2003
- *Clinical Journal of Oncology Nursing* Mentor-Fellow Writing Program, Mentor, 2001
- *Clinical Journal of Oncology Nursing*, Review Board Member, 1999–2003
- ONS Leadership Development Institute, Fellow, 1998



Cheri LaCasse, MS, RN, OCN®

Clinical Associate Professor
University Medical Center
Tucson, AZ

Leadership Experience

- ONCC Nominating Committee, Member, 2004–2007
- OCN® Test Development Committee, Member 1997–2001, Chair 2001–2004
- Oncology Certification Test Development Process Improvement Task Force, Member, 2002–2003
- ONS Evidence-Based Practice Research Advisory Group, Member, 2004–2006
- Program Committee, Southern Arizona Oncology Nursing Society, 1996–1999
- Oncology Certification Review Course, Faculty, Boston Oncology Nursing Society, 1990–1995
- Chapter leadership positions, including Program Committee Chair, President-Elect, President, Nominating Committee Chair, Boston Chapter of the Oncology Nursing Society, 1989–1995



Update From the ONCC Board of Directors

Carol Brueggen, RN, MS, APRN-BC, AOCNS®

On July 13–14, the ONCC Board of Directors and committee chairs met during the ONS Mentorship/Leadership Meeting in Pittsburgh. New Board members were introduced, including newly elected members Julie Earle, RN, BSN, OCN®, and Carol Brueggen, RN, MS, APRN-BC, AOCNS®, Board-appointed public member Adele Hammermon, MLA, and ONS Board Liaison Bertie Ford, RN, MS, AOCN®. Committee chairs in attendance included OCN® Test Development Committee Chair Tamara Barnes, RN, MSN, AOCN®; Nominating Chair JoAnn Coleman, RN, MS, AOCN®, ACNP; CPON® Test Development Committee Chair Ruth Landers, RN, MSN, CPNP, CPON®; and *ONCC News* Editor Heather Mackey, RN, MSN, ANP, AOCN®.

The ONCC Board of Directors discussed the following items during the two-day meeting.

- The Board reviewed the results of the breast care role delineation study and voted to proceed with development of a certification examination for breast care. More information, including eligibility information, can be found on page 2.
- ONCC is in the process of transitioning from Prometric to Pearson VUE for administration of the certification examinations. Please see page 1 for additional information.
- Currently, verification of a nurse's oncology certification costs \$15. In the future, this process will be done free online.
- Results of the OCN® role delineation study and changes to the OCN® Test Blueprint were discussed. Please see page 1 for additional information.
- ONCC has created an Advanced Practice Task Force to study issues affecting advanced nursing practice across the Unit-

ed States and make recommendations to the Board regarding issues that need to be addressed and/or policy or other changes that need to be made. Members of the task force include immediate past president Patricia Baldwin, RN, MS, OCN®; President Carlton Brown, APRN, PhD, AOCN®; Carol Brueggen, RN, MS, APRN-BC, AOCNS®; Vicki Norton, RN, BSN, OCN®; past president Julie Ponto, RN, PhD, AOCN®; Barbara Rogers, RN, MN, CRNP, AOCN®; and ONCC Executive Director Cynthia Miller Murphy, RN, MSN, CAE.

- ONCC will submit an abstract on the data obtained from the American Board of Nursing Specialties Value of Certification Study to the International Society of Nurses in Cancer Care Conference to be held in Singapore in 2008.
- A recent reader survey conducted by the

(See "Board," page 10)



Joan O'Hanlon Curry Named CPON® of the Year

Janice Nuuhiwa, MSN, APN/CNS, CPON®

The outpatient oncology division at the Children's Hospital at Montefiore (CHAM) has experienced an extreme makeover during the past two years, thanks, in large part, to Joan O'Hanlon Curry, RN, MS, CPNP, CPON®, 2007 CPON® of the Year. Curry is the administrative nurse manager and lead pediatric nurse practitioner in the outpatient oncology center at CHAM, located in Bronx, NY. Dr. Richard Gorlick writes, "In just two years since joining CHAM, Curry has already made a major impact on the quality of care delivered, the research infrastructure, the administrative organization of the division (which has had far reaching impact on the hospital overall), the education of nurses/nurse practitioners, and in establishing standards." Curry's zeal for program development and quality care are evident in the accolades of her peers.

Karen Moody, MD, MS, commented on Curry's expectations of excellence. Moody states, "Joan has encouraged all of her staff to be certified in pediatric oncology." Currently, 75% of the pediatric nurse practitioners are CPON® certified and 100% of the RNs will complete the CPON® test by the end of 2007. As an ONCC Advocate, Curry serves as a resource for her colleagues. She is an End-of-Life Nursing Education Consortium (ELNEC) trainer, an Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses (APHON) chemotherapy/biotherapy instructor, and an Oncology Nursing Society chemotherapy/biotherapy instructor. Extending her reach to her patients, families, and the community, Curry has created a "town hall" environment in which patients and families can gather to discuss current issues. She developed educational in-services for the local rehabilitation hospital to teach staff about the special needs of patients



with cancer. Curry also actively participates in educating her colleagues across the nation in a variety of ways, including having recently presented at the national APHON conference.

Of most recent acclaim, Curry created an ambulatory chemotherapy program, which entails sending patients home with hydration and/or continuous chemotherapy infusions and providing transfusions in the day hospital instead of the inpatient unit. The program was recently profiled in the *Journal of Pediatric Oncology Nursing* (Vol. 24, No. 5 [September–October], 2007, pp. 294–298). Curry has traveled to other centers to share her experience in creating this innovative program that intertwines delivery of care, patient satisfaction, and quality initiatives. Future program implementation includes creating a school re-entry program, a process already in progress, thanks to Curry.

In her role as an agent of change, Curry co-founded the oncology council, a forum for the adult and pediatric practitioners to come together to standardize care and revise existing policies. She also serves on numerous institutional committees, including the Service Excellence Committee, Infection Control Committee, Pediatric Quality Committee, and Bereavement Committee. Her involvement on these key committees enables her to bring together the complex systems that make up excellence in pediatric oncology care.

"[Curry] has served as an inspiration to her peers as well as to those from other related disciplines as a leader in pediatric oncology nursing for her outstanding achievements in pediatric oncology clinical practice, education, and service," Moody states. Congratulations to Joan O'Hanlon Curry for being named the 2007 CPON® of the Year.

Readers Respond

Readers Share Reasons for Celebrating Certification

The spring issue of *ONCC News* asked, "How does your institution celebrate oncology certification?" Following is a sample of the responses received.

At the Coborn Cancer Center, we have a poster with the names of the staff and the certification achieved, and the staff can display their certification in a frame on the unit. At unit meetings, we recognize certified nurses by presenting a certificate of achievement and a certification pin. We also publish recognition of certified nurses in our newsletter.

Brenda Eveslage, RN, OCN®
St. Cloud, MN

Ocean Medical Center captures the celebration of oncology nursing certification at every opportunity in the following way.

- Reimbursement for the testing fee after successful completion
- A base salary increase of \$1 more per hour after receiving certification
- Names of oncology nurses who have passed the exam are posted on announcements and in our unit-based shared-governance newsletter.
- Nurses passing the exam are recognized with a celebration (cake, food, etc.) at the monthly staff meetings, and the oncology leadership presents oncology certified nurses with a gift (flowers, etc.) and card upon successful completion.
- Oncology certified nurses are listed on the plaque provided by ONCC.

(Continued on page 5)



“What’s in It for Me?” Tangible Benefits of Certification

Michael Smart, RN, BSN, OCN®

Many healthcare organizations are taking a closer look at certification as part of plans to improve staff retention and quality of care. Certification also has received more attention as organizations seek to meet the requirements for Magnet status from the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). For individual nurses, there has been a fair amount written regarding the benefits of certification in oncology. The intrinsic rewards of improved confidence in providing care and a sense of accomplishment are recurring themes of becoming certified.

Unfortunately, for some oncology nurses, the intrinsic rewards alone have not been enough to get the process started. Intrinsic rewards are, after all, not seen until completion of the process. According to the American Board of Nursing Specialties (ABNS), the most frequently identified obstacles cited by nurses for not achieving certification are

- A lack of employer support
- An absence of institutional rewards for becoming certified
- The cost of certification exams.

As organizations seek to address the perceived obstacles, nurses may feel it also would be helpful to examine effective strategies to provide motivation. The “Walls of Fame” and other inexpensive methods of recognizing nurse achievement often are used, but little information has been published on more tangible rewards offered to recognize certification. For employers, the obvious unanswered question is whether tangible rewards work. For the nurse, it may be simply a matter of expecting pay to reflect the merit of performance.

In discussions with nurses around the country, many nurses have expressed an interest in knowing what other organizations are doing to support certification. Sometimes the interest is mere curiosity; but often it is with the frustration of feeling that certification is not recognized or rewarded in a meaningful way. The “Why bother?” question, for them, remains unanswered.

For this article, information was gathered from nurses working at 17 institutions throughout the United States. Linda Peason, RN, MSN, AOCN®, an advanced practice nurse at the University of Southern California/Norris Cancer Hospital in Los Angeles, said nurses there are given a \$1,000 bonus upon attaining initial certification and \$500 upon renewal. Test fees also are reimbursed along with up to \$500 per year for continuing education programs that can be used toward maintaining certification. Seth Eisenberg, RN, OCN®, professional practice care coordinator at the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance, says, “Certified nurses are given an additional \$1/hour pay differential.” He also notes that test fees are paid for as long as a passing score is obtained, and fees for associated continuing education activities are reimbursed. According to Norma L. Massier, BSN, OCN®, CRNI, assistant department manager at Samaritan Ambulatory and Home Infusion in Corvallis, OR, “Nurses in the bargaining unit are given 3% on top of base pay for attaining and maintaining certification.”

Not all organizations financially reward certification, but they do provide financial incentives. Denise Korn, RN, MSN, OCN®, of High Point Regional Health System in North Carolina, said that study guides are provided and attendance at in-house review courses is reimbursed with hourly pay. The test fee, often a barrier to certification, is paid up front. The nurses do not have to repay the fee as long as they obtain a passing score. Renewal of certification is paid out of the hospital’s career assistance fund. At Shore Memorial Hospital Cancer Center in Somers Point, NJ, cancer program manager Lisa Aiello-Laws, RN, MSN, APN,C, AOCNS®, APNG, reports that the organization presents nurses with certification pins upon attaining certification, incorporates certification and financial incentives into the clinical ladder, and reimburses test fees when a passing score is obtained.

(See “Rewards,” page 6)

Readers Respond

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- Oncology certified nurses (both renewals and newly certified nurses) are listed in the annual nursing achievement book published by our health system.
- Oncology certified nurses are listed on posters during our annual Oncology Nurses Day celebration and in a slide show during our annual oncology staff retreat.

Michele E. Gaguski, MSN, RN,
AOCN®, APN-C
Brick, NJ

During Nurses Week, the Professional Development Council at The Ohio State University Medical Center’s James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute hosted its second annual Certification Recognition Celebration. Invitations were distributed to all nurses with specialty certification, which included more than 200 nurses. A breakfast buffet was served to about 100 attendees, many of whom came from off-campus locations. Various members of the nursing leadership staff spoke about nursing and the value of certification, and several certified nurses shared personal stories. All certified nurses were given a coffee card as a token of appreciation. Response from the staff was overwhelmingly positive, and the council plans to continue this tradition in years to come.

Kimberly Catania, MSN, RN, AOCN®
James Cancer Hospital and Solove
Research Institute

Readers Respond Question

How does your institution financially compensate nurses for attaining certification?

Send your response to oncc@ons.org or fax it to 412-859-6168.

Rewards

(Continued from page 5)

The following table describes how some of these organizations reward their employees for obtaining certification. When looking at the table, it is important to realize that only tangible rewards are examined. Inherent weaknesses of the table include the inability to capture less concrete reward systems. For example, it may be true that certified nurses are more likely to excel and subsequently

also be rewarded in annual performance reviews, but this is not a measurable and consistent reward system. It also may be true that some organizations hold certification as an eventual expectation of employment. In this case, it is possible that pay rates reflect the more specialized staff.

Weaknesses aside, this table may provide useful information for those building a case

for a more systematic, objective, and consistent reward system for nurses who make the effort to become certified. It may help to answer the questions some may be asked regarding what other organizations are doing. It is also an interesting look at how these organizations use certification as an objective measure in providing performance-based financial incentives for their nurses.

Tangible Benefits Provided for Certification	Number of Institutions Providing the Benefit (N = 17)	Examples of the Benefit
Monetary bonus/pay differential for attaining initial certification or renewing certification	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1,000 for initial certification • \$500 bonus for second certification in a different area • Up to \$2,000 “Special Advancement for Achievement Award” • Annual \$500 supplemental pay for certification • \$100 monthly stipend (\$1,200 annually) for certification • 5% raise specifically for oncology certification • 3% increase over base pay for certification • \$1/hour differential for certification • \$500 bonus for renewal of certification
Financial support for test fees/recertification fees	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% reimbursement of test fees upon passing • 50% reimbursement of test fees upon passing • Payment of test fees up front. If nurse does not pass, she or he may test again at own expense. • Recertification fees paid out of hospital career assistance fund • Annual \$500 fund for Nursing Career Advancement that may be used for certification preparation or fees
Financial support for study guides, reference materials	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study materials paid up front • Study materials are provided; additional study materials purchased by nurses are reimbursed at 50%. • Copies of <i>Oncology Nursing Core Curriculum</i> provided • Annual \$500 fund for Nursing Career Advancement that may be used for certification preparation or materials
Paid time off to attend review courses	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nurses reimbursed at hourly pay to attend in-house certification review courses • Reimbursed with education pay for in-house certification review courses • Full-time RNs receive up to 40 hours at base salary annually for completion of programs that can be used for certification preparation or renewal.

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Financial support for review courses and educational programs	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reimbursed for costs of review courses • Reimbursement for costs of continuing education programs for certification preparation or certification renewal • Annual \$500 fund for Nursing Career Advancement that may be used for certification preparation or materials • Reimbursed up to \$500/year for CE programs toward maintaining certification
Certification incorporated into clinical ladder for advancement opportunities	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certification awards incorporated into clinical ladder program in which financial incentives are offered for all criteria being met • Certification is incorporated into clinical ladder program as an item on the self-advancement portfolio. Advancement on the clinical ladder includes a 5% base pay increase.
Certification pin presented	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pin presented at staff ceremony
No reimbursement or monetary incentives provided	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No tangible benefits offered

Employer Spotlight

CPON®s Generate Certification Excitement at Seattle Clinic

Janice Nuuhiwa, MSN, APN/CNS, CPON®

The Hematology/Oncology Outpatient Clinic of Children’s Hospital and Regional Medical Center in Seattle has much to celebrate. Having received their recognition plaque in May 2007 for having 12 CPON®-certified nurses/advanced practice nurses, their dedication to supporting certification efforts continues to move forward, thanks to the momentum of their certified nurses.

Children’s Hospital supports certification by offering review courses on site, paying for test fees, and providing certification premium pay. They have a group of clinical RNs who conduct the review classes and provide support and guidance to those seeking certification. They also have a nurse educator in the clinic who serves as a resource and another CPON®-certified nurse who provides Web links and articles to obtain contact hours, which are needed to meet initial eligibility criteria as well as for certification maintenance through the Oncology Nursing Certification Points Renewal Option. The nurse educator identifies internal hospital support while another CPON® facilitates methods for obtaining contact hours from external sources. To-

gether, the CPON®-certified nurses have spearheaded the supportive elements provided by the medical center as well as the recognition initiatives.

Certification is recognized and monetarily rewarded by a certification premium added to the newly certified nurses’ hourly salary. CPON® certification also is recognized as a credential added to the hospital identification badge worn by the nurses. The oncology clinic takes an additional approach toward recognition through the “Cheers for Peers! Nurse Recognition Program,” which offers a certificate and small gift to the nurses who become certified, which are presented at the monthly staff meetings. The oncology clinic has a large dry-erase “Cheers for Peers!” board that is located between the nursing and provider areas. They write daily kudos to people for jobs well done and achievements, so when nurses attain CPON® certification, they write their names on the board and give them a big “KUDOS to YOU” for their accomplishments. This accolade remains on the board for a few days, which affords everyone the opportunity to congratulate the newest CPON®s.

The department, along with the support of the “Cheers for Peers!” program, encourages CPON® certification by positive reinforcement and peer example. Their most recent recognition endeavor included a nursing celebration in May 2007. It was a project that combined both National Nurses Week and Oncology Nursing Month. They took pictures of nurses in action and created a large collage to display as a way to celebrate nursing professional accomplishments, which includes CPON® certification. Zoë Sonoda, RN, BSN, CPON®, stated, “As more of the veteran nurses become CPON®, the excitement is contagious and gives hope to others who feel that they can’t study or are ‘not as smart as the newer nurses.’” Sonoda, a key player in supporting CPON® certification within the ambulatory environment, also recognizes success as interest is generated among nurses with varying degrees of experience within the practice environment. *ONCC News* gives “KUDOS to YOU,” Children’s Hospital and Regional Medical Center of Seattle, for supporting certification efforts and fueling the creative energy generated by your CPON®s!

The Who, What, and How Behind the ONCC Nominating Committee

Mark Flitcraft, RN, BSN, OCN®

As part of further exploration of the various ONCC volunteer roles, this month *ONCC News* is going behind the scenes with the Nominating Committee. Have you ever wondered about the functions that this group performs and how its work serves to support the overall mission of ONCC?

The primary responsibility of the Nominating Committee is to oversee the election process for positions on the ONCC Board of Directors. They are involved in the election process from start to finish, operating with support from the ONCC staff and the executive director. The committee is composed of five members, including the chair, all of whom must be oncology certified nurses. Members of this committee have familiarity with the organization, its philosophy, and its strategic plan. They are typically past ONCC Board members, ONCC Advocates, item writers or volunteers in other roles within ONCC. Members serve for three years and have the option of renewing for an additional three years if they are asked to extend their terms. Meetings usually are held via conference call.

Some of the primary duties that this committee performs are to recruit new Board member applicants, review applications once they are received, and prepare the slate of candidates for the ballot. In this function, the Nominating Committee workload is directly proportional to the number of Board

After individually reviewing and evaluating each nomination received, the Nominating Committee meets via conference call and discusses the nominees and their ratings. During the call, a final list of candidates is approved and slated for election. The Nominating Committee presents the ballot, communicates election results to the Board of Directors, and ensures the overall integrity of the election process.

“I believe in ONCC, and it’s also a way for me to network and contribute to the oncology nursing community.”

When asked why she volunteers for such a committed position, Coleman replies, “I believe in ONCC, and it’s also a way for me to network and contribute to the oncology nursing community. Plus, I get to travel to Pittsburgh in the summer and meet other committee chairs, and that’s always nice. Also, ONCC treats its volunteers well just like ONS does, and it is always a class act.”

In 2006, this committee had a busy year with many applicants for two Board positions and also a public member position on the ONCC Board to identify and recruit for. Narrowing the applications received is not an easy process because the applicants all may be well qualified and extraordinary examples of the oncology nursing community.

member openings that are expected, which changes annually. JoAnn Coleman, RN, MS, AOCN®, ACNP, Nominating Committee chair since 2005 and a past president of ONCC, stated, “ONCC is good at maintaining continuity of their Board membership, and they try to not have multiple members changing within the same year, which makes our job easier!”

If any certified oncology nurse is interested in participating on this important committee, please contact ONCC for committee openings. Applications are received year-round, but positions usually are filled in the spring because ONCC elections are held in the fall, and committee membership needs to be in place prior to this process.

Nominations Wanted for New Certification Champion Award

ONCC is calling for nominations for its first Pearl Moore Certification Champion Award.

The award was created to recognize an individual, group, or institution that consistently advocates for, promotes, or rewards nurses for oncology certification.

The recipient will receive \$1,000, and a crystal award and will be recognized at

And the Award Goes to . . .

What types of nurses are nominated for awards such as OCN® of the Year and the Advanced Oncology Certified Nurse of the Year? Nurses like you and your colleagues, who’ve made significant contributions to oncology nursing practice and oncology nursing service and who’ve promoted the value of certification.

Do you know someone who deserves recognition? Submit a nomination for the 2008 OCN® of the Year or Advanced Oncology Certified Nurse of the Year awards by December 1, 2007. The winner will receive \$1,000 and be recognized at the ONCC Recognition Breakfast for Oncology Certified Nurses. Nomination packets, including eligibility criteria, can be found at www.oncc.org/awards/awards.shtml.

the ONCC Recognition Breakfast for Oncology Certified Nurses. More information and nomination instructions are available at

www.oncc.org/awards/moore.shtml. Nominations must be received by **December 1, 2007**.

Employers Increase Number of Certified Staff

ONCC recently awarded 46 plaques to oncology settings where the majority (more than 50%) of professional nurses are ONCC-certified. ONCC provides the plaques free to any patient-care setting that meets the majority requirement. Congratulations to those that received plaques.

To apply for a plaque for your institution or to update a certificate on an existing plaque, download an order form at www.oncc.org/awards/plaques.shtml.

Adirondack Medical Center, Oncology Unit, Saranac Lake, NY
 Austin Diagnostic Clinic, Chemotherapy Infusion, Texas
 Berks Hematology Oncology Associates, Regional Cancer Center, West Reading, PA
 Big Sky Oncology, Great Falls, MT
 Blue Ridge Medical Specialists, PC, Bristol, TN
 Boulder Community Hospital, Cancer Care Center, Colorado
 Cancer Care Associates, Fresno, CA
 Cancer Center of North Carolina, Asheville
 Centegra Health System, Sage Cancer Center, McHenry, IL
 Center for Cancer Care at Goshen Health System, Indiana
 Christ Hospital and Medical Center, Outpatient Oncology, Oak Lawn, IL
 Columbia St. Mary's, Oncology Clinic, Mequon, WI
 Community Medical Center, Outpatient Infusion, Toms River, NJ

DCH Regional Medical Center, Cancer Treatment Center, Tuscaloosa, AL
 Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Oncology/Chemotherapy Clinic, Wilmington, DE
 Hematology-Oncology Associates of Houston, Texas
 Hematology/Oncology Practice of Southside Virginia, PC, South Boston
 Hematology Oncology Centers of the Northern Rockies, Butte Office, Montana
 Hematology Oncology Centers of the Northern Rockies, Cody Office, Wyoming
 Heywood Hospital, Oncology and Specialty Clinics, Gardner, MA
 Huron Hospital, Cancer Center, East Cleveland, OH
 James P. Wilmot Cancer Center, University of Rochester Medical Center, Radiation Oncology, New York
 King's Daughters Hospital and Health Services, Madison, IN
 Main Line Health System, Main Line Health CCOP, Wynnewood, PA
 Massachusetts General Hospital, Radiation Oncology, Boston, MA
 Miriam Hospital, Comprehensive Cancer Center, Providence, RI
 New Ulm Medical Center, Infusion and Oncology Services, Minnesota
 North Bend Medical Center, Oncology Unit, Coos Bay, OR
 Olathe Cancer Care, PA, Olathe, KS
 Olympic Medical Cancer Center, Sequim, WA
 Owensboro Medical Health System, 5-3

Oncology Unit, Kentucky
 Owensboro Medical Health System, Outpatient Oncology, Kentucky
 Pennsylvania Oncology Hematology Associates, Chemotherapy Unit, Philadelphia
 Providence Holy Cross Medical Center, Oncology Unit, Mission Hills, CA
 Providence Regional Cancer Partnership, Cancer Program, Everett, WA
 Regional Cancer Center, Durham, NC
 Saint Francis Medical Center, Oncology, Grand Island, NE
 St. Luke's South Shore Hospital, Vince Lombardi Cancer Clinic, Cudahy, WI
 Summit Cancer Services, Waynesboro
 Summit Cancer Services, Chambersburg, PA
 Texas Oncology, Amarillo
 Texas Oncology Cancer Center, Austin
 Texas Oncology Longview Cancer Center, Longview
 The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center, Arthur G. James Cancer Hospital and Richard J. Solove Research Institute, Martha Morehouse Plaza Infusion Unit, Columbus
 The Valley Hospital, Ambulatory Infusion Center, Paramus, NJ
 Weatherford Regional Medical Center, Terry George Sisk Oncology Unit, Texas
 West Penn Allegheny Oncology Network, Punxsutawney Office, Pennsylvania
 West Penn Allegheny Oncology Network, New Kensington Office, Pennsylvania

Nurses Step Up as Advocates for Certification

Eighteen oncology certified nurses have joined the Oncology Nursing Certification Advocates Program. Advocates are certified nurses who voluntarily promote the value of certification in their workplaces, chapters, and communities. To view a complete list of advocates by state or to download the Advocate Program application form, visit <http://www.oncc.org/support/advocatesProgram.shtml>.

Karyl Blaseg, Billings, MT
 Jennifer Burnett, Racine, WI
 Susan Cahoon, Gainesville, FL
 AnnMarie Christian, Philadelphia, PA
 Nancy Corbitt, Baltimore, MD
 Lynn Dennis, Winfield, IL
 Amy Ehli, Sioux Falls, SD
 Deena Gillard, Conyers, GA
 Shelley Green, Hendersonville, NC
 Dawn MacCartney, Tampa, FL

Karen Kane McDonnell, Silver Spring, MD
 Amalia (Amy) Ortaleza, San Diego, CA
 Kelly Powers, Towson, MD
 Carlotta Quiban, San Diego, CA
 Mary Sahl, Fargo, ND
 Zoe Sonoda, Seattle, WA
 Debbi Thompson, Duluth, MN
 Peggy Welch, Grayslake, IL

Practice Round

Sharpen Your Test-Taking Skills

“Practice Round” offers sample items from ONCC practice tests. The following items were taken from the free CPON® Practice Test available at www.oncc.org/PracticeTests/default.aspx. The answer, rationale, and reference for each item can be found to the right.

1. While at a clinic appointment, the parent of an adolescent, who has completed therapy for cancer, expresses concern that the patient is moving away from home for college. What is the nurse’s best response?
 - A. Advise the family to meet with a school guidance counselor.
 - B. Express concern that distance may cause noncompliance with follow-ups.
 - C. Recommend an appropriate clinic for follow-up care while the patient is away.
 - D. Suggest that the patient postpone going away to school for six months.

2. Which of the following interventions reduces the risk of infection in patients after hematopoietic stem cell transplantation?
 - A. Drinking bottled water to prevent gut contamination
 - B. Use of lubricants topically to prevent skin breakdown

- C. Administering monthly IV immunoglobulin
- D. Discontinuing immunosuppressive therapy at day 100

Answers

1. C. Rationale: During adolescence, emancipation and independence from parents are important. Independence must be balanced with familiar influences and culture. Nurses must collaborate with the parents and adolescent in decision making. Parental concerns must be addressed, but the adolescent must be actively involved in the process. The nurse models a way for the parents to be supportive yet still have their concerns and needs met.

Baggott, C.R. (2002). *Nursing care of children and adolescents with cancer* (3rd ed., p. 378). Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders.

2. C. Rationale: Infection following bone marrow transplantation is a major cause of morbidity and mortality. The usual dosage of immunoglobulins for children with bone marrow transplants is 400–500 mg/kg/dose every week for three months then once every month.

Taketomo, C.K., Hodding, J.H., & Kraus, D. (2005). *Pediatric dosage handbook* (12th ed., pp. 674–675.). Hudson, OH: Lexi-Comp.

Board

(Continued from page 3)

ONCC News Editorial Board indicated some displeasure following the conversion to an electronic format in 2007. The ONCC Board approved a proposal to distribute four electronic issues in 2008 along with printing and mailing two of the versions, which would contain all the information from the electronic newsletters. Readers will be asked which version they would prefer to receive: electronic versus hard copy. The Board will evaluate this new process in 2008.

- Per the request of the Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses (APHON), ONCC will examine whether to add hematology to the CPON® examination. Hematology will be included in the next CPON® role delineation study. The ramifications of the potential changes will be further investigated.
- The ONCC Board also updated the strategic plan. Four focus areas were discussed: new programs, globalization, advocacy, and research.



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ONCC Mission Statement

The mission of the Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation is to promote and provide oncology nursing certification for the enhancement of patient care and professional practice.

The Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation was established for the development, administration, and evaluation of a program for certification in oncology nursing. Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation, 125 Enterprise Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15275-1214 (877-769-ONCC or 412-859-6104, phone; 412-859-6168, fax; oncc@ons.org, e-mail; www.oncc.org, Web site)