

Going to the Source

This issue of the *Oncology Nursing Forum* (*ONF*) contains an unusually large number of letters to the editor, which is a particularly good form of professional exchange and one that we encourage. Some of the letters were written in response to a specific article, and two of those letters come to us by way of *ONS Connect*. The authors of the article and I thank our readers for their careful attention to the material, requests for clarification, and their suggestions. Some of you may be asking why letters directed to *ONS Connect* are being printed and addressed in *ONF*. This seemed to be a good opportunity to explain why and to offer additional perspectives on the use and dissemination of information.

ONS Connect debuted in January, marking yet another milestone in the evolution of the Oncology Nursing Society's (ONS's) serial publications. As a stronger and more substantive version of *ONS News*, *ONS Connect* accomplishes a number of goals set by Editor Debra Wujcik, RN, MSN, AOCN®, a special project team, the *ONS News* Editorial Board members, and ONS staff members. They are to be congratulated for a readable, informative, and appealing product—one that expands our portfolio of publications and provides content that we do not cover well in *ONF* and the *Clinical Journal of Oncology Nursing* (*CJON*). In addition, *ONS Connect* provides content suited to the pace and style that characterize the professional lives of many of today's nurses.

The initial idea for *ONS Connect* bubbled up years ago at a long-term publications planning meeting in response to our dilemma that many ONS members needed information in an abbreviated and quickly accessed format. Clinical information was well covered in *ONF* and *CJON*, but those of us at the table (ONS print and Web site editors, ONS publications staff members, and member representatives) all acknowledged that a portion of the membership did not read the articles in the journals. Rather than change the nature of the articles in our peer-reviewed journals and because of our professional obligation to contribute to the science and art of nursing,

the suggestion was made to expand the *ONS News* to distribute information in a quick reference format so that those readers would have access to important knowledge. When discussing clinical knowledge, we decided to build on the peer-reviewed articles in *ONF* and *CJON* rather than looking for writers to

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develop new material. As a result, the Five-Minute In-Service feature that appears in each issue of *ONS Connect* was born.

The first article chosen to be abstracted for the *ONS Connect* feature originally appeared in the November 2006 issue of *ONF*. After the January 2007 issue of *ONS Connect* was published, *ONF* was already in the process of publishing a response to two letters regarding the November 2006 article. We were able to expand the response to answer questions and issues also posed by the two letters to *ONS Connect*. The decision to publish the content all in one place (i.e., in *ONF*) was based on more than a desire to consolidate the information; we needed to reiterate readers' understanding of the process of the Five-Minute In-Service and determine the most appropriate approach to posing questions.

ONS Connect describes the Five-Minute In-Service as "a monthly feature that offers readers a concise recap of full-length articles published in *CJON* and *ONF*." The feature is written by a scientific writer on the ONS Periodicals Publishing staff who receives a byline. When abstracting information, there will always be some decisions to make in regard to the amount of information that can be provided. We all will be refining that skill over time. It is important that the scientific writer who prepares the material not be confused

with or credited as the author of the source article. Furthermore, it is not appropriate to reference the article in *ONS Connect* when writing or preparing a presentation. The source article, whether in *ONF*, *CJON*, or another journal, should be consulted first if you have questions and should always be cited when providing a formal reference. Likewise, questions regarding content in a Five-Minute In-Service should be addressed to the authors of the source material. For all of these reasons, we will continue to handle any letters to the editor in the original publication.

One final point can be made about the correct use of the source material. Information provided in the author response sometimes will result in changes or qualifications to the original material, which is the case with the material covered in Letters to the Editor in this issue. When that occurs, the changes are listed in the databases (e.g., PubMed®, CINAHL®) so that when the original article is included in a literature search, the correction is referenced as well. Even though *ONS Connect* is indexed in the databases, the connection to the source material may be made only indirectly and thus may be lost in the process.

Trying to meet the needs of our members is an involved process and one that all of the editors, editorial boards, and ONS Periodicals Publishing staff take very seriously. Even though this situation required us to more closely examine the ramifications of one of our decisions, I believe that the Five-Minute In-Service is a terrific idea whose time has come. I am very pleased to see that our readers are committed to having a dialogue with us about what is important, the things we publish, and the ways in which we do our jobs. I look forward to more exchanges in the future and to the opportunity to continually refine the ways in which we communicate information and share expertise.

Editorials represent the opinions of the author and not necessarily those of the Oncology Nursing Society.

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