The International Society of Nurses in Cancer Care: Position Statements Can Aid Nurses to Think Globally and Act Locally

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The number of new cases of cancer is expected to rise by about 70% during the next two decades, and people living in low- and middle-income countries will experience a disproportionate burden of this increase (Stewart & Wild, 2014). Oncology nurses are positioned to take the lead in addressing this looming health crisis. Such efforts will gain momentum and have a greater impact if nurses around the world collaborate. The purpose of this article is to describe the role of the International Society of Nurses in Cancer Care (ISNCC) in leading this effort, with a particular focus on three specific position statements that nursing societies and nurse leaders can use to advance cancer prevention and control in their own institution or country.

For more than 30 years, the ISNCC has provided the infrastructure for oncology nurses around the globe to work together to maximize the influence of nursing to reduce the global burden of cancer. ISNCC encourages its members to actively participate in the work and leadership of the Society. Members are welcome to join ISNCC committees and task forces that are engaged in efforts to advance oncology nursing education, knowledge dissemination, patient care, and policy.

ISNCC members represent more than 50 countries worldwide, and, as of December 2015, ISNCC had 45 full-member organizations, 68 association members, and more than 1,000 individual members (H. Kwong, personal communication, December 4, 2015). Full members include national cancer nursing societies, such as the Oncology Nursing Society; regional cancer nursing societies, such as the European Oncology Nursing Society; and oncology institutions, such as cancer centers and hospitals. ISNCC also provides an opportunity for individual cancer nurse clinicians, researchers, and educators to become part of an international network of professionals in the field of cancer nursing by joining as individuals. Membership fees are reduced for nurses in low- and middle-income countries. Globally, ISNCC members represent more than 60,000 cancer nurses.

ISNCC has continued to work to build and sustain stakeholder relationships and to ensure the ongoing success of these relationships in work internationally. Critical to the success of ISNCC are strategic partnerships. ISNCC is a member of the Union for International Cancer Control and a specialty member of the International Council of Nurses. ISNCC has formal memorandum of understanding agreements with the Oncology Nursing Society, the European Oncology Nursing Society, the Asian Oncology Nursing Society, the Multinational Association of Supportive Care in Cancer, and the International Psycho-Oncology Society.