Research Agenda of the Oncology Nursing Society: 2019–2022

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PROBLEM STATEMENT: To define the Oncology Nursing Society Research Agenda for 2019–2022.

DESIGN: Multimethod, consensus-building approach by members of the Research Agenda Project Team.

DATA SOURCES: Expert opinion, literature review, surveys, interviews, focus groups, town hall, and review of research priorities from other cancer care organizations and funding agencies.

ANALYSIS: Content analysis and descriptive statistics were used to synthesize research priority themes that emerged.

FINDINGS: Three priority areas for scientific development were identified: symptom science, health disparities, and palliative and psychosocial care in oncology. In addition, cross-cutting themes that provide context and elaboration for these priorities emerged.

IMPLICATIONS FOR NURSING: The Research Agenda can be used to focus oncology nurses’ research, scholarship, leadership, and health policy efforts to advance quality cancer care, inform research funding priorities, and align initiatives and resources across the ONS enterprise.

KEYWORDS research; symptom science; health disparities; palliative care; psychosocial care

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The Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) promotes excellence in oncology nursing and quality cancer care. In keeping with this mission, since 2001, ONS has developed and disseminated a Research Agenda identifying priority areas where new knowledge is urgently needed. The purpose of the Research Agenda is two-fold: it includes both the development and dissemination of contemporary research priorities needed to advance cancer care and delineates critical areas to be considered by research funders.

A multimethod approach was used to develop the Research Agenda. ONS identified content experts to serve on the project team. This team was broken into smaller work groups to address various tasks that needed to be accomplished to update the Research Agenda. The first work group was convened to review the previous process used to formulate the prior ONS Research Agenda and discuss the best way to update the process in a scientifically rigorous yet time- and resource-efficient manner (Knobf et al., 2015). The previous process spanned multiple years and involved surveying ONS members, publishing survey results, and then convening an expert panel to update the Research Agenda based on survey responses. Given the low response rates (11%) and the lack of a clear set of focused research priorities that emerged from analysis of the survey results, an alternative approach was discussed to actively engage ONS members with expertise in research together with other key stakeholders to yield a focused set of research priorities (LoBiondo-Wood et al., 2014).

A condensed process was recommended by the work group to identify a focused set of contemporary