Advanced Practice Nursing Outcomes: 
A Review of Selected Empirical Literature

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Key Points . . .

➤ The complex care needs of patients with cancer have created opportunities for growth in oncology advanced practice nurse (APN) roles in a number of practice settings.

➤ Strong evidence from well-designed investigations supports the effectiveness of oncology APNs in the home setting, and evidence is emerging in the ambulatory area.

➤ The knowledge base for APN outcomes needs to be expanded. Systematic evaluations of the process of care provided by APNs to patients with different types of cancer receiving care in diverse practice environments are needed to more fully inform the understanding of this issue.

Goal for CE Enrollees:
To enhance nurses’ knowledge about the outcomes of advanced practice nursing with a specific focus on the work of oncology advanced practice nurses (APNs).

Objectives for CE Enrollees:
On completion of this CE, the participant will be able to
1. Define the term advanced practice nurse.
2. Discuss the impact of APN practice on clinical, cost, and satisfaction outcomes.
3. Identify aspects of advanced practice nursing that need to be studied further.

The work of advanced practice nurses (APNs) is thought to enrich the healthcare system by adding value to the delivery of healthcare services (Spross & Heaney, 2000). Articulating how, why, and for whom they add value is critical to the future viability of the APN role and the delivery of quality healthcare services to the public. The need to understand the role that oncology APNs play in effecting outcomes was identified as a priority at the 1994 State of the Knowledge Conference on Advanced Practice in Oncology Nursing. The APN Survey Team reported that this issue remains unresolved and suggested an urgent need to undertake additional work in this area (Lynch, Cope, & Murphy-Ende, 2001). The purpose of this article is to explore selected empirical literature examining advanced practice nursing interventions and outcomes, with a focus on outcomes related to oncology advanced practice nursing. Goals of the work include outlining conceptual and methodologic issues pertinent to the measurement of advanced practice nursing outcomes, providing a brief review of the historical literature about advanced practice nursing effectiveness, examining relationships between oncology advanced practice nursing interventions and outcomes, considering challenges