
Press Release

Contact

The US Oncology Network
Claire Crye, Public Relations
281.825.9927 claire.crye@usoncology.com

The US Oncology Network Launches Innovative Program to Foster Retention of New Oncology Nurses

Results show a 70 percent knowledge improvement and an improved retention rate

THE WOODLANDS, TEXAS, Nov. 21, 2024 — In response to the increasing shortage of oncology nurses and the high turnover rates in the profession, [The US Oncology Network](#) (The Network), a leading oncology organization supported by McKesson dedicated to advancing local cancer care and better patient outcomes, has developed an innovative program to support the professional development and retention of new oncology nurses. Understanding the critical importance of fostering a supportive and empowering learning environment for nurses entering the oncology field, The Network launched the Oncology Core Education and Networking (OCEAN) program. This initiative has already made a significant positive impact, demonstrating its effectiveness in addressing these pressing challenges.

“Cancer incidence is rising while a shortage of experienced oncology nurses is occurring,” said Devon Womack, president, The US Oncology Network. “New nurses must be supported, as they encounter numerous challenges. Our new OCEAN program fosters skills and knowledge of basic cancer care to help them successfully manage the many stresses they face. We are extremely excited about the success we have already experienced with this unique initiative.”

Early results from the program are very encouraging. Since launching in April 2023, there are currently 170 nurses from 26 practices taking part in the program. Increased retention rates have been realized by participating practices. Approximately 82% of nurses who participated in the program are still employed at one-year, 12% better than the national average reported in the *2023 NSI National Health Care Retention & RN Staffing Report*. Participants also noted a dramatic 70% knowledge improvement between their pre and post course assessment.

“Cancer care is extremely complex and constantly evolving, with a huge learning curve for nurses with no cancer background,” noted Heather Wood, BSN, RN, OCN, clinical education specialist, The US Oncology Network. “The OCEAN program provides dedicated time for virtual sessions that deliver a comprehensive overview of the fundamental areas of oncology care. Its live format also promotes teamwork and collaboration, supporting and encouraging new oncology nurses to learn and grow.”

The OCEAN initiative is the latest offering from The Network designed to assist independent practices meet the many challenges of providing superior advanced cancer care in a community setting. A collaborative effort utilizing a multidisciplinary team of experts and speakers from The Network and McKesson, the program is invaluable for all oncology nurses entering the field as it provides basic knowledge on 12 core areas of cancer care. Presented over 22 1/2 hours of live virtual learning, the format is engaging and interactive, encouraging discussion and Q&A sessions. Games and quizzes are used as learning tools, as well as lectures, in an effort to make learning enjoyable and effective. A virtual

Press Release

escape room also builds teamwork, enabling participants to gain their freedom by using and sharing their newfound knowledge.

“We have had tremendous success with the OCEAN initiative, resulting in less turnover and more engaged employees,” said Marie Garcia, RN, OCN, director of Clinical Operations, Virginia Cancer Specialists, a practice in The Network. “Our attrition rate dropped from nearly 18% in 2021 to less than 2% by July of 2024, and the nurses completing the program tell us they feel valued by the practice for helping them gain the skills they need to succeed. The program has also enhanced the collaborative relationship between the more experienced nurses and the new ones.”

About The US Oncology Network

Every day, [The US Oncology Network](#) (The Network) helps more than 2,750 independent providers deliver value-based, integrated care to patients — close to home. Through The Network, these independent doctors come together to form a community of shared expertise and resources dedicated to advancing local cancer care and to delivering better patient outcomes. The Network provides practices with access to coordinated resources, best business practices, and the experience, infrastructure, and support of [McKesson Corporation](#). This collaboration allows the providers in The Network to focus on the health of their patients, while McKesson focuses on the health of their practices. The Network is committed to the success of independent practices, everywhere.

About McKesson Oncology and Specialty Solutions

It’s an unprecedented time for patients living with cancer as life sciences companies race to create new, cutting-edge therapies. With cancer care becoming more targeted, providers, life sciences companies, and payers face a multitude of challenges and complexity in the development of new treatments and making them accessible to patients in need. At [McKesson](#), our unmatched portfolio of oncology businesses and partners provide research, insights, technologies, and services that are helping to address these hurdles and improve cancer and specialty care.

- McKesson is fueling discovery by helping patients participate in cutting-edge clinical trials closer to home through its joint venture with [Sarah Cannon Research Institute](#).
- [The US Oncology Network](#) and [McKesson Provider Solutions](#) are advancing specialty care and high-quality cancer care in the communities where patients live by supporting the practices of thousands of independent, community-based providers.
- [Ontada](#)[®], a McKesson business dedicated to oncology, generates real-world data (RWD) and real-world evidence (RWE), and provides clinical education and provider technology to inform and improve cancer care.
- As one of the largest distributors of oncology and specialty medicines, we are ensuring medicines make their way to those who are counting on them.
- And through [CoverMyMeds](#), [Biologics by McKesson](#), and [GPO services](#), our work continues to help patients access, afford, and adhere to their medicines.

###