ADVANCING GLOBAL CANCER SYMPTOM SCIENCE: INSIGHTS AND STRATEGIES FROM THE INAUGURAL CANCER SYMPTOM SCIENCE EXPERT MEETING

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Introduction

The inaugural "Cancer Symptom Science Expert Meeting", held in Lausanne Switzerland on October 11 and 12, 2023, brought together 40 nurse scientists representing seven countries. The event aimed to enhance collaboration across the global symptom science community; identify common research interests and gaps in knowledge; and develop strategies to decrease challenges and accelerate symptom science research internationally.

Methods

Day one featured keynote presentations that highlighted critical issues and unanswered questions in cancer symptom science. On day two, attendees formed working groups (WG) aimed to discuss and summarize the state of the science; identify opportunities and challenges; and outline strategic directions and essential actions to further advance symptom science.

Results

- **WG1** Optimal Approaches to Collect, Analyze, and Use Symptom Data for Clinical and Research Purposes
- **WG2** Development of a Minimum Data Set for Symptom Science Research
- **WG3** Enhancement of Best Practices in Implementation Science
- **WG4** Creation of an Infrastructure for International Partnerships in Symptom Science

Summary of Working Groups

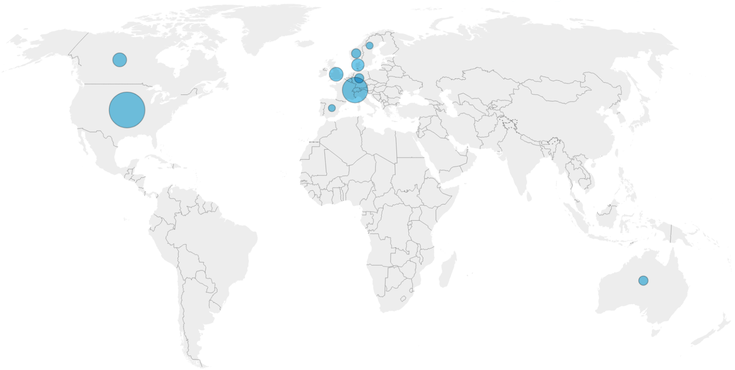
	WG1	WG2	WG3	WG4
Challenges	Symptom data are under-collected and underutilized for research and clinical practice	Lack of consistent collection of symptom data across research and clinical practice and across institutions	Lack of symptoms and treatment toxicity focused PROs as standard of care	Lack of global infrastructure in symptom science
Opportunities	Collect **multiple forms of symptom data** including self-report, clinical observations, wearable devices, biological specimens, and behavioral, environmental, and social contexts	Develop minimum data sets using **common data models** to capture similar constructs of symptom experiences across studies	Incorporate a **model of implementation science to use PROs** for assessment and to guide symptom management strategies	Develop a **formal organization** to drive global symptom science
Strategies	Establish **collaborative partnerships** Develop **standardized methods** for symptom data collection	As minimum data sets are developed; **translate instruments** into different languages across cultures to enhance uniformity	Promote use of **implementation science methods** to optimize uptake and scale up of evidence-based symptom interventions that are person-centered	Establish a **governing body, mission, and vision** to drive the initiative

PROs: Patient-Reported Outcomes

Conclusion

WG recommendations underscore the commitment of an international coalition of nurse scientists to advance cancer symptom science. The expert meeting laid the groundwork for the group to formalize a global research alliance dedicated to symptom science research across acute and chronic conditions, the **Global Research Alliance for Symptom Science (GRASS).**

Number and location of GRASS researchers (May 2024)



United States	39
Switzerland	19
Denmark	4
Norway	2
Sweden	1
Germany	2
Spain	1
United Kingdom	5
Canada	5
Australia	2
Total	80

Future directions include establishing regular meetings and fostering interdisciplinary collaboration with symptom scientists across specialties.

Overview of past and future meetings and initiatives

April 2023
symptom science mini-symposium supported by the Oncology Nursing Society (ONS)
US

October 2023
Cancer Symptom Science Expert Meeting
Switzerland

April 2024
ONS-supported GRASS meeting
US

June 2024
MASCC GRASS meeting
France

September 2024
EONS
Spain

Publication on-going:
GRASS White paper

Strategic Plan 2024-2025

Publication:
Papers on plenary lectures from the Lausanne symposium – special issue in *Seminars in Oncology Nursing*

Mapping of GRASS researchers and collaboration opportunities

Organizing the next scientific meeting in 2025

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