

Access to nurse navigators in geriatric oncology leads to improved patient experience among older adults with cancer.

NURSE NAVIGATION IN GERIATRIC ONCOLOGY: A SCOPING REVIEW

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INTRODUCTION

- More older adults are being diagnosed with cancer globally, and this number continues to rise.
- Older adults with cancer have distinct needs related to cognition, mobility, and comorbidities, which make cancer diagnoses and treatment more complicated.
- Patient navigation is a nurse role designed to meet the needs of people with cancer across the cancer trajectory.
- Prior research shows that when nurses serve as cancer patient navigators, patients experience improved quality of life, and enhanced symptom management.

The purpose of this study was to understand to what extent nurse navigators have been used in geriatric oncology to support the needs of older adults with cancer.

METHODS

- We conducted a scoping review of the literature using the method outlined by Arksey and O'Malley and the PRISMA-ScR guidelines.
- A search of peer-reviewed studies (with the search terms: Nurse navigation, older adults, and cancer) from 2000 to present with English articles was conducted in two databases CINAHL, and PubMed in August 2023.

RESULTS

- 480 abstracts were reviewed, and 112 studies were included in full text review. 12 studies were included in the final review, of which eight focused exclusively on older adults.
- Nurse navigators were defined as Registered Nurses who **remove barriers to care, provide supportive care, and improve access to care** for older adults with cancer.
- There is no specific guideline or policy that outlines what services nurse navigators should provide to geriatric oncology patients.

CONCLUSION

- Nurse navigation is a growing role in cancer care and clearly addresses critical gaps in the care of older adults.
- Our results demonstrate the current state of the literature related to how the nurse navigator role is operationalized, and how it overlaps with similar roles.
- This work forms a foundation to begin to develop practice-guiding documents for geriatric oncology nurse navigation.

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Nurse navigators in geriatric oncology addressed needs related to:

