

# OCN Study Sessions: Prepping for Certification Success

Diana Kott, MSN, RN, OCN, NPD-BC

Marie Riehl, MSN, RN, OCN

## Significance:

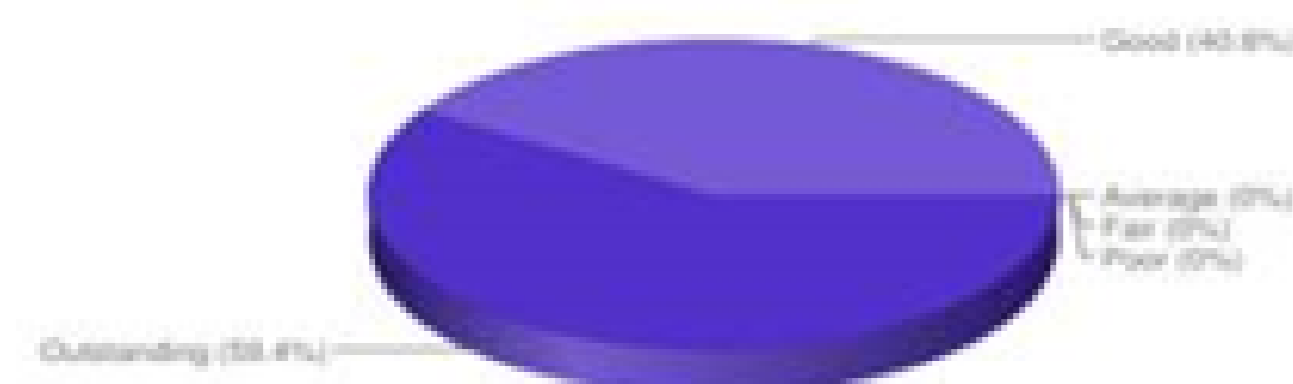
The Nursing Professional Development (NPD) team coordinates a biannual Oncology Nurse Core Curriculum program as a preparation for the OCN certification. Based on program evaluations, the NPD team identified the need for individual studying support to further prepare for the exam. A nurse leader and NPD specialist, who both maintain their OCN certification, collaborated and formally surveyed all nursing staff, further validating the need for additional educational support.

## Purpose:

The study sessions promote the ongoing process of learning and colleague support, while also improving certification percentages. Certification enhances the knowledge and practice of the registered nurse, directly impacting patients across the care continuum. The study sessions provide an opportunity for professional growth development and clinical expertise.

- OCN Study Session Program Objectives:**
1. Outline a study guide in preparation for the Oncology Nurse Certification
  2. Identify the current oncology treatments and symptom management for various cancer diagnoses

Overall Rating of Objectives (Rating: 4.59 of 5.00)



## Interventions:

Acting as the nurse facilitators, the nurse leader and NPD specialist offered supplementary study sessions every other month. The study sessions, in addition to attending the Oncology Nurse Core Curriculum program, are unique opportunities to learn from the facilitators and fellow colleagues, while bringing questions regarding the OCN content. Nursing Continuing Professional Development (NCPD) contact hours are also awarded to attendees. An online nursing forum was created for nurses who attend the study sessions to share information and support each other as a complimentary form of support. This forum allows for ongoing interaction, support, and feedback while preparing for certification.

## Evaluation:

Since the implementation of the study sessions, two RNs have successfully achieved their OCN certification. In the study session program evaluations, attendees have stated that the sessions are valuable and have helped them further identify content areas in need of improvement. Most attendees have stated that they plan to sit for their certification exam within three to six months after attending. The study sessions and additional resources offer support with the goal of increasing staff certification by a minimum of five percent within a year of implementation.

## Discussion:

The nurse leader and NPD specialist saw value in supporting staff nurses who are looking to grow personally and professionally through certification. Oncology care is a complex evolution of new information and research, shifting of paradigms, and improving clinical practice. Certification empowers the oncology nurse and strengthens their proficiency and commitment to patient-centered care. Certification is the pathway to grow leaders within our organization, influencing and driving patient outcomes.

