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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Oncology Nursing and Social Work Professional Associations Release Position on Patient Navigation**

PITTSBURGH, PA – April 13, 2010 – The Oncology Nursing Society (ONS), the Association of Oncology Social Work (AOSW), and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) worked together to develop a joint position statement on the role of oncology nursing and oncology social work in patient navigation. The joint position is a direct result of a think tank that convened in Pittsburgh, PA, in June 2009, during which representatives from ONS and AOSW worked collaboratively, along with representation from NASW, to discuss the role of patient navigation and identify needs of the healthcare professional in this emerging new role for oncology nurses and social workers as they care for patients from pre-diagnosis through all phases of the cancer experience. The position statement is just one of many efforts that are a result of the collaborative think-tank meeting.

Pamela “PJ” Haylock, PhD, RN, representing ONS, and Pam Murph, LSCW, representing AOSW, were co-chairs of the joint Patient Navigation Think Tank.

“This position is a foundational statement for each of these professional organizations,” said Haylock. “It offers guidance for strategic planning and subsequent efforts to define and support development of patient navigation preparatory programs, roles, and services for a variety of cancer care settings.”

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“I am excited that AOSW, ONS, and NASW were able to come together for this wonderful collaborative effort,” said Murph. “Through this, we have constructed a position on patient navigation that our memberships, as well as other professional colleagues in social work and nursing, will be able to utilize as patient navigation continues to emerge. Patient navigation is a process that is essential in cancer care, and in this position statement, we have laid out what we see as organizations to be integral to patient navigation.”

“NASW is proud to be at the forefront of such important discussions on the social work role in patient navigation,” said Karyn Walsh, ACSW, LCSW, senior NASW practice associate. “Social workers have functioned as navigators with patients for many years and will continue to practice in this professional role. NASW is proud to collaborate with ONS and AOSW in the publication of this consensus paper on the position of patient navigation.”

The full position statement can be viewed at each organization’s website as shown below.

ONS is a professional organization of more than 37,000 registered nurses and other healthcare professionals committed to excellence in oncology nursing and to leading the transformation of cancer care by initiating and actively supporting educational, legislative, and public awareness efforts to improve the care of people with cancer. ONS provides nurses and healthcare professionals with access to the highest quality educational programs, cancer care resources, research opportunities, and networks for peer support. Learn more at [www.ons.org](http://www.ons.org). Read the full position statement at <http://www.ons.org/Publications/Positions/Navigation>.

AOSW is a nonprofit, international, 501(c)3 organization dedicated to the enhancement of psychosocial services to people with cancer and their families. Created in 1984 by social workers interested in oncology and by existing national cancer organizations, AOSW has more than 1,000 current members who embrace the AOSW mission “to advance excellence in the psychosocial care of persons with cancer, their families, and caregivers through networking, education, advocacy, research, and resource development.” Learn more at [www.aosw.org](http://www.aosw.org).

NASW is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world, with 150,000 members. NASW works to enhance the professional growth and development of its members, to create and maintain professional standards, and to advance sound social policies. Learn more at <https://www.socialworkers.org/>.