

Moving Forward, Together

Debra Lyon, RN, PhD, FNP-BC, FAAN

I appeal to you, the readers and authors, to continue the legacy of this journal as the voice of patients, families, and communities affected by cancer.

This past summer, while attending a genetics conference in Bar Harbor, Maine, I was informed that I would be the incoming editor of the *Oncology Nursing Forum* (ONF). Since then, I have tried to coalesce my thoughts to write my first editorial. Bar Harbor in July is as idyllic a setting for musings as one could hope for. Even so, I was finding it difficult to express my gratitude for this opportunity to provide stewardship to ONF, one of the premier journals in the field of oncology nursing and an important part of the history of the Oncology Nursing Society (ONS).

Since 1977, ONF has provided a venue for oncology nursing research dissemination to help foster the translation of research evidence into practice. I am proud to be a part of a distinguished group of nurses who have led ONF during the past 46 years, and I am honored to be selected for the position by the nominating committee and publishing leadership at ONS. However, my enthusiasm in accepting the editor position is tempered with a bit of caution about becoming an editor after many years spent focused on practice and academia. Becoming an editor will be a new and different challenge for me. Writing editorials, for example, will stretch my writing style, which has been honed carefully during the past 20 years to leave out the personal while focusing on the objective and measured. It will be a bit outside my academic comfort zone of grant writing and academic administration;

however, I look forward to exercising this new style and developing this new skill.

My career and personal focus has been on research, teaching, practice, and academic administration. My predoctoral work examined depression and purpose of life in people living with HIV. Since then, my research has shifted to the intersection of biology, symptom manifestations, and quality of life, primarily in women with breast cancer. I am keenly interested in “-omics” and symptoms, with the long-term goal of symptom prediction and, ultimately, targeted treatment development to prevent and/or mitigate symptoms. My second line of research focuses on expanding the pipeline of minority students who will form the researchers and clinicians of the future and, together, focus on eliminating health disparities in cancer. The first aspect of my research is current, self-directed, and team-directed; the second focus is long-term and developmental but one of the most rewarding aspects of my work.

To take on the challenge of becoming an editor, in my usual problem-focused manner, I conducted a literature review using keywords such as *editor* and *editor transition*. One of the first results from the search was a quote by former *Clinical Journal of Oncology Nursing* (CJON) editor Deborah Mayer, PhD, RN, AOCN®, FAAN: “You don’t start out your term as an editor. You leave as an editor” (Mayer, Sheldon, Tony, & McGee, 2015, p. 1). I worked as an associate editor for CJON with Deborah and would like to thank her for helping me frame my thinking at the beginning of this journey. In this first editorial, I will address how I would like to leave as editor, focusing on legacy.

How do I want to leave as editor? I hope to leave the journal in the manner of Anne Katz, PhD, RN, FAAN, whose kindness and assistance to me has been

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invaluable and whose stewardship of *ONF* during the past eight years firmly places the journal in a position of strength. During her time as editor, Anne promoted an atmosphere of openness, connectedness, and collegiality, and said in her final editorial that “it’s all about the relationships” (Katz, 2019, p. 643). I have a keen appreciation of this legacy, as well as the importance of connections and relationships to oncology nurses in patient care, research, and healthcare systems. In addition to nurturing new and continued relationships, becoming a successful journal editor will require focus on other measures that guide current publishing practices. I want to leave the journal with sound metrics, such as impact factor, citation numbers, and engagement analytics, with an understanding that these measures have known benefits and limitations (Fire & Guestrin, 2019). For a journal with a circulation of 36,000, expanding the reach also requires that we consider additional methods of dissemination, such as social media platforms and Altmetrics, to complement traditional measures of impact (Crew, 2019). In addition to the changes in the treatment landscape, disruptions in publishing—including the open access movement and the rise of predatory journals—requires a keen focus on the legal and business aspects of publishing oncology nursing research, given that there are more than 30,000 academic journals now in circulation (Langin, 2019). In addition to changes in the publishing landscape, known innovations and trends in oncology that will likely affect practice and research in oncology nursing include targeted therapies, increased survivorship, a heightened need for palliative care, and probable changes in the healthcare delivery system. Synchronizing our research with these emerging trends will foster innovation and our scientific inquiry.

I appeal to you, the readers and authors of *ONF*, to work with me, the editorial board, and publishing staff to continue the legacy of this journal as the voice of patients, families, and communities affected by cancer. Please contribute to disseminating the seminal research that we conduct and whose results we make

a commitment to publish so that others may benefit. As part of developing the next generation of oncology nursing scientists, we will continue to encourage new authors to pursue publication in *ONF* while also serving as a journal of choice for experienced authors who continue to lead scientific development in our field. We also serve as a voice for the editors emerita, editorial board members, peer reviewers, authors, and publishing staff who have been committed to and guided *ONF* during the past 46 years. I am looking forward to meeting you at professional conferences, connecting with you online as we expand more into e-communication, and listening to your ideas, stories, and innovative thinking. Together, we will continue to co-create the unique legacy of *ONF* as the premier voice for oncology nursing research.



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