

Nursing

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CANCER NURSING: A EUROPEAN DIMENSION

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The geographical area of Europe consists of nearly forty countries, all of which differ somewhat in terms of their health delivery systems, nurse education and the position of nurses in society. Therefore, it is not surprising that there are enormous variations in cancer nursing practices throughout the European region. These variations most probably arise as a result of differences in culture, politics, and economic well-being. Despite these differences, cancer nurses throughout Europe all espouse the philosophy of providing high quality care for cancer patients and

their families. This defines a common purpose for European cancer nurses.

The European Oncology Nursing Society (EONS) is committed to overcoming economic, political, language and cultural barriers in order to achieve this purpose. EONS, established in 1984, is a federation of organisations, institutions and agencies with exclusive or partial interest in cancer nursing. At present, EONS has forty members from over 24 countries who together represent over 12,000 nurses. This paper will present an overview of how EONS is overcoming the above-mentioned barriers in areas such as cancer nurse education, settings standards for cancer nursing practice, influencing health policy and cancer nursing research. The paper will also address EONS's role in supporting patients' rights to information and education.