

Reflections from the Early Career Nurses Working Group at EONS17 and ESMO24

Conferences

Co-authored by the members of the ECN WG

The Early Career Nurses (ECN) Working Group (WG) from the European Oncology Nursing Society (EONS) had an incredible experience at the EONS17 at ESMO24 conference this year. With so much to learn and share, our journey was both inspiring and incredibly enriching. We gathered not only to attend world-class presentations but also to hold our own in-person and online meeting. In addition, several working group members participated in sessions and presented their work.

Dimitris Protogiros, co-chair of the ECN WG and board representative, participated in the N.U.R.T.U.R.E. session and presented “Building up resilience in cancer nursing, strategies and skills”. Hazal Özdemir Koyu, WG member and ECN representative in the scientific committee, served as chair for multiple panels, and presented in the SIOPE – EONS collaborative session “CN5 - Journeying Through the Landscape of Home-Based Pediatric Cancer Care: Needs and Expectations from the Insights of Children and Parents”. 2 other ECN WG members, Mark Dornan and Carike Barnardo, displayed their scientific posters during the conference. Nuria Aguado Machancoses and Irati Rodriguez Matesanz, were also able to attend the conference in-person this year.

Regardless of whether we attended the conference and meetings in person or virtually, throughout the conference, we immersed ourselves in the latest advances in cancer care, prevention, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation, and/or palliative care. A particular highlight was learning about the growing role of Antibody-Drug Conjugates (ADCs) and targeted therapies, which are revolutionizing targeted cancer therapies. As nurses, understanding these cutting-edge treatments is crucial for patient education and managing the side effects that come with new therapies.

Beyond treatment innovations, we also deepened our knowledge in managing the often-complex side effects of cancer therapies. From physical symptoms to emotional challenges, it became clear how pivotal our role is in supporting patients throughout their cancer journey, not just during treatment but into survivorship and sometimes during end of life care.

Survivorship care was another major focus during the conferences. We had the opportunity to hear about the evolving roles of oncology nurses in helping survivors navigate life after cancer, a phase that requires its own unique set of skills, empathy, and care strategies. The emphasis on survivorship care plans and improving the quality of life for survivors reaffirmed the need to continued nursing development for this crucial aspect of cancer care.

Our meeting during the conference provided a valuable space to reflect on these learnings and explore how we, as early-career nurses, can contribute to these advancements. We also continued to work on ongoing projects from the team, such as the establishment of an Early Career Nurses Network.

As we continue to grow professionally, the EONS17 and ESMO24 conferences have equipped us with essential insights, a renewed sense of purpose, and a network of passionate colleagues across Europe and the World. We look forward to translating these experiences into actionable change in oncology nursing.

Stay tuned for more updates from the Early Career Nurses Working Group as we continue to advocate for education, innovation, and excellence in cancer care!

