

# Study defines roles and responsibilities of patient navigators

December 23 2013

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New research out of the George Washington University Cancer Institute (GWCI) defines the roles and responsibilities of patient navigators. With the rapid growth of patient navigation, the paper seeks to develop a framework to describe similarities and differences across navigators and clarify their place in the health care system, leading to greater standardization of the profession. The paper, titled "Development of a framework for patient navigation: delineating roles across navigator types," was published in the *Journal of Oncology Navigation and Survivorship* on Dec. 23.

Patient navigation, which includes community [health](#) workers and clinically licensed navigators such as nurses and social work navigators, has begun to play a critical role in the continuum of care.

"This is the first step in creating consensus-based competencies for non-clinically licensed patient navigators," said Mandi Pratt-Chapman, M.A., associate director at GWCI and principal investigator for the project.

"The initial [framework](#) was made possible by support from the Avon Foundation for Women. With new support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, we will establish a free, competency-based training in the year ahead to benefit the field nationally."

The consensus-based framework was coordinated by staff at GWCI with contributors from the Association of Community Cancer Centers, the National Association of Social Workers, the Association of Oncology Social Work, the Oncology Nursing Society, the Academy of Oncology

Nurse Navigators, Capital City Area Health Education Center, Nueva Vida, City of Hope, Moffitt Cancer Center, the University of South Florida and MAC, Inc.

Lead author, Anne Willis, M.A., director of the division of cancer survivorship at GWCI, housed within the GW School of Medicine and Health Sciences, led the development of the framework that includes 12 functional area domains and indicates areas of commonality and distinction among community health workers, patient navigators, and clinically licensed navigators. Elizabeth Reed, M.P.A., project manager for [health care](#) professional education at GWCI, also coordinated on the project.

Provided by George Washington University

Citation: Study defines roles and responsibilities of patient navigators (2013, December 23)  
retrieved 5 May 2024 from  
<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-12-roles-responsibilities-patient.html>

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