



# APOS

american psychosocial oncology society

*Advancing the science and practice of psychosocial oncology.*

## **Research, Practice and Policy Imperatives for Psychosocial Care**

### **A Roadmap in a New Era of Value-Based Cancer Care**

# 2020



# The Future is Now

Precision medicine. Exponential growth in cancer diagnoses. Huge disparities. Financial toxicity. Telehealth. Workforce shortages. Even without a pandemic, cancer care has been rapidly evolving amidst a system in crisis. ACS estimates that the number of cancer survivors will grow from 16.9 million to 22.1 million in this decade. The critical need for high reach, high impact AND *efficient* psychosocial services has never been more urgent or more apparent than in this time of Covid-19. Healthcare delivery has changed dramatically—and we're not going back!

As psycho-oncologists, we need to think beyond our usual methodologies and develop clinical and research strategies that ensure that the patient /family voice is amplified. We need data to demonstrate the value of our services and our impact on the bottom line of the business of cancer. Systems thinking will enable us to reach beyond the walls of the cancer center to deliver psychosocial interventions to patients and families when and where they need it most. We need research to expand our understanding of the patient/family experience in the context of today's treatment and survivorship. We must embrace technology to help more people access psychosocial care in ways we have yet to imagine.

APOS, as the leading multidisciplinary psychosocial oncology organization, is uniquely positioned to set clinical practice, research and policy imperatives that provide a roadmap for the decade ahead. Please use this roadmap as your Call to Action to drive your research agenda, practice evolution, institutional readiness and patient advocacy for value-based psychosocial care at this critical time.

Pre-Covid 19, the APOS Board worked collaboratively with a *2020 Roadmap Steering Committee* to gather critical insights from our membership and thought leaders across many disciplines and practice settings. Our goals were to identify the changes in oncology that are influencing our work and delineate new priorities for psychosocial oncology research, clinical practice, and policy in the years ahead.

## AS MEMBERS OF APOS, WE ARE PSYCHO-ONCOLOGY PROFESSIONALS COMMITTED TO:



1. Ensuring that people with cancer have access to personalized, highly accessible psychosocial support services that are rooted in evidence to be effective and impactful;
2. Investing in the care and cultivation of a psychosocial oncology workforce that is best-in-class and motivated towards leadership;
3. Advocating for increased funding to ensure that caring for the whole person with cancer is the one 'true north' in oncology.

*Never has the psychosocial health and well-being of people impacted by cancer been more paramount to the cancer care eco-system...we cannot stand idly by and do what we've always done. If we did not know it before the pandemic, we know it now. Lives depend on it!*



**Vicki Kennedy, LCSW, FAPOS, FAOSW**  
President 2019-2020

The content of this report was obtained by the following methods:



Association Reports



Thought Leader Interviews



Membership Surveys



Landscape Analysis

# Critical Focus Needs for the Future of Psychosocial Oncology

Member Survey Results | January 2020;

Top 5 Areas Identified in each Domain:

## Research



Models of Psychosocial Care



Care Disparities



Mental, Emotional and Relational Health Across the Cancer Trajectory



Population Health



Technology

## Clinical Practice



Models of Psychosocial Care



Business of Oncology Value Based Care



Mental, Emotional and Relational Health Across the Cancer Trajectory



Physical Health Across the Trajectory



Technology

## Policy and Advocacy



Patient Financial Impact



Care Disparities



Mental, Emotional and Relational Health Across the Cancer Trajectory



Population Health



Business of Oncology Value Based Care



*"More funded research is needed to not only demonstrate the value of clinical psychosocial services but to broadly disseminate better models of care that reduce distress, improve health outcomes and impact the cost of care."*

- APOS Member Survey

# APOS IMPERATIVES TO DRIVE QUALITY CARE

## THE APOS COMMITMENT

- ◆ We must seek better channels to disseminate relevant research to all cancer care providers with simple solutions for cost-effective integration into cancer care.
- ◆ We must stimulate more effective research collaboration and data sharing to better address complicated questions and issues in psychosocial care today.
- ◆ We must demonstrate, through clinical practice and research, that our work not only improves quality of life and health outcomes but also reduces disparities and the cost of care.
- ◆ We must better define the relationship between psychosocial oncology and palliative/supportive care.
- ◆ We must elevate our voice as advocates for our patients, for psychosocial oncology professionals and our field of study at the system and policy level.

APOS's **Clinical Practice, Research and Policy Priorities** are intended to inspire the vision and work of psychosocial oncology professionals in the decade ahead. APOS will endeavor to promote these priorities in professional education and training, practice evolution, research design/implementation, and policy initiatives.

## CLINICAL PRACTICE PRIORITIES

- Employ evidence-based interventions that more efficiently address mental, emotional and relational health across the cancer trajectory
- Implement models of psychosocial care delivery that expand collaboration, improve care coordination, drive equity and provide integration of care across the cancer eco-system for all patients especially those at-risk
- Optimize the use of technology in psychosocial care delivery and assessment, designing innovative care models, and resource optimization
- Activate evidence-based interventions that foster self-care management for patients and caregivers
- Demonstrate the value of psychosocial services through adaptation of an "evaluation mindset" aligned with the priorities of the care setting
- Deliver a high quality, standardized training curriculum for psychosocial oncology professionals and other team members

## RESEARCH PRIORITIES

- Prioritize dissemination of current findings through implementation science, clinical collaboration and academic-community partnerships
- Include value and health economics metrics to demonstrate the impact of unmet psychosocial needs on the cost of care
- Investigate interventions at the patient, provider, system and policy levels that address health equity and care disparities
- Design and evaluate multi-component psychosocial care delivery models
- Reassess previous data on adjustment, treatment toxicities and social, mental, emotional health needs in relation to the cutting-edge, precision medicine today
- Develop and test technology and its application in psychosocial assessment, treatment and follow-up
- Amplify the psychosocial components that contribute to or result from inequities in access and optimization of quality cancer care

## POLICY PRIORITIES

- Address the financial impact of cancer through better identification of the problem and mobilization of institutional, community and societal resources
- Champion policies that address care disparities including access to care and social determinants of health
- Advocate for the economic value of better coordinated, psychosocial oncology programs and services



# CHANGE IS HAPPENING: ARE WE AWAKE?

APOS thought leaders have identified the most pivotal changes in oncology and healthcare that are already influencing our field today.

## Healthcare Economics & Value

- Shifting focus to “value not volume”
- Significant financial toxicity for families
- Limited data on the value of psychosocial oncology
- Disruptions in health insurance delivery system
- Workforce shortages

## Technology

- Slow adoption of digital solutions by health systems
- EHR dissatisfaction & frustration
- Lack of effective digital tools that optimize self-care management
- Resistance that high tech implies low touch

## Special Populations & Health Equity

- Widening gaps in care for the most vulnerable patients
- Unique needs for geriatric, pediatric/AYA patients/families
- Limited adoption of culturally-sensitive psychosocial interventions
- Increased burden on caregivers
- Low attention to the underserved needs in cancer care such as mentally ill, uninsured, homeless

## Evolutions in Oncology Treatment

- Less toxicity coupled with higher costs
- Complex treatment decision making & navigation needs
- Access inequities & lack of diverse patient participation in clinical trials
- Access to innovation challenges for rural, underserved and under-insured patients
- Metastatic patients living longer



*From point of care to point of need - psychosocial oncology can expand its influence and value by designing research and clinical models that deliver the care patients need, when and where they need it.*

**Lynne Padgett, PhD**

Chair, 2020 Roadmap  
Steering Committee



### Selected References:

American Cancer Society. Cancer Facts & Figures 2019. Atlanta: American Cancer Society; 2019

Cancer Program Standards: Ensuring Patient-Centered Care  
©2015 American College of Surgeons • Chicago, IL

Kirkwood MK, Hanley A, Bruinooge SB, Garrett-Mayer E, Levit LA, Schenkel C, Seid JE, Polite BN, and Schilsky RL. The State of Oncology Practice in America, 2018: Results of the ASCO Practice Census Survey *Journal of Oncology Practice* 2018 14:7.



## Advice for Early Career Professionals in Psychosocial Oncology:

### Leadership and Professional Development

- ♦ **Focus on the Greatest Gap.** Use this roadmap to identify the greatest needs in research, practice and/or policy today.
- ♦ **Choose wisely.** Early in our careers, it is easy to say yes to everything. Learn how to say yes to worthy projects that drive incremental change – not every opportunity that comes along.
- ♦ **Become more self-aware.** Our cultural & racial biases run deep. Invest in cultural sensitivity & practice it daily.
- ♦ **Mentorship is essential.** Whether a clinician or scientist or both, utilizing a mentor can transform your career.

### Expand Your Knowledge

- ♦ Become experienced in methodologies that focus on implementation and delivery of care
- ♦ Extend your professional capacity through technology
- ♦ Think beyond psychosocial and become fluent in understanding the business of oncology.

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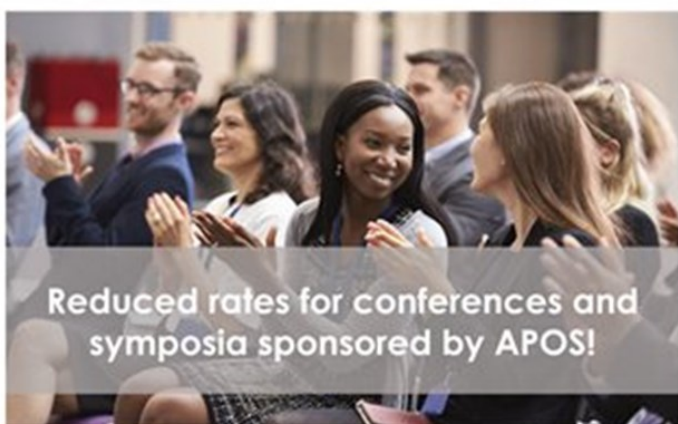
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- ♦ Jeff Kendall, PsyD
- ♦ Tamryn Gray, PhD, RN
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APOS  
american psychosocial oncology society

Advancing the science and practice of psychosocial oncology.



**APOS is the *ONLY* multidisciplinary organization in the United States dedicated to researching and treating the psychosocial aspects of cancer throughout the lifespan.**



The **MISSION** of the American Psychosocial Oncology Society is to advance the science and practice of psychosocial oncology.



The **VISION** of the American Psychosocial Oncology Society is a nation in which all people affected by cancer have access to quality psychosocial care to optimize health outcomes.

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