



The term “patient navigator” is a broad title that refers to all people that are helping cancer patients navigate the health care system. After reviewing different systems around the country, it was obvious that the navigator title is used to describe anyone from a lay person who is a cancer survivor, to advance practice nurses, master’s prepared, functioning as nurse educators/navigators.

As there are many unique programs throughout the country, as well as numerous diverse programs throughout North Carolina, we felt it best to embrace and welcome all navigators providing services to cancer patients in our state into full membership in the North Carolina Oncology Navigator Association (NCONA). Although all types of navigators are of equal value with many overlapping roles, we did find that a navigator with clinical expertise offers something different than perhaps a lay navigator might. We would like to propose the following categories of navigators, within NCONA, that will enable each type of navigator to network with and share information with others in similar roles.

- Nurse Navigator---RN specializing in Breast, Thoracic, Hematology, Brain/Neuro, GI, GU, head and neck cancers
- Resource or Service Navigators---Non-nurse background including MSW, LCSW, chaplain, counselor, etc.
- Lay Navigator---Cancer survivor, volunteer, caregiver

### **Organizational Goals**

- To embrace the vision and mission of the [North Carolina Cancer Plan](#).
- To increase awareness of the Oncology Navigator Role.
- To ensure that ALL newly diagnosed patients and their caregivers will be provided with patient navigation resources.
- To promote collegiality for best practice and to share resources.