Abstract

Care Needs in Cancer Survivorship: A Scoping Review

Ottavia Sirò[1,2], Andrea Moro[1,3], Mariarosaria Gammone[4], Martina Barbieri[1], Chiara Maddalo[1,2], Sara Mezini[1], Marco Di Nitto[1], Milko Zanini[1], Loredana Sasso[1], Gianluca Catania[1], Annamaria Bagnasco[1]

[1] Department of Health Sciences, University of Genoa, Genoa, Italy
[2] IRCCS AOM Ospedale Policlinico San Martino, Genoa, Italy
[3] Direction for Healthcare Professions, European Institute of Oncology IRCCS, Milan, Italy
[4] Fondazione IRCCS Istituto Neurologico Carlo Besta, Milan, Italy
(Corresponding Author: andrea.moro@ieo.it)

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Introduction. Cancer survivorship requires comprehensive, person-centred care addressing needs and outcomes across the disease trajectory. However, evidence on the care needs most frequently reported by adult cancer survivors and on the outcomes assessed in oncology settings remains fragmented. This scoping review aimed to map the nursing literature on patients' needs and outcomes in adult oncology care across hospital, outpatient, and home care settings, with a specific focus on cancer survivorship.

Methods. The review was conducted according to the Joanna Briggs Institute methodology, based on the Arksey and O'Malley framework and subsequent updates by Levac et al., and reported in line with PRISMA-ScR. In March 2025, a systematic search was performed in MEDLINE, CINAHL, Web of Science, PsycINFO, and Embase using a Population, Exposure, Outcome framework. Primary quantitative and qualitative studies published in English or Italian, with no time restrictions, were eligible if they addressed adult oncology patients' needs and/or outcomes. Records were managed in Rayyan, duplicates were removed, and screening was performed independently by reviewers in blinded mode, with disagreements resolved through discussion. Data were extracted using a predefined matrix, and studies were classified according to the care continuum and nursing-sensitive outcome domains.

Results. Ninety-five studies published between 1996 and 2025 were included, yielding 227 outcomes. The most frequently investigated categories were symptoms (n = 44), quality of life (n = 43), unmet needs (n = 40), and emotional well-being (n = 36), whereas self-care (n = 3) and role functioning (n = 11) were marginally represented. Most studies were conducted in English-speaking countries (51.6%), while Italian evidence was almost absent (n = 1). Cross-sectional and longitudinal observational designs predominated. Men, young adults, and older adults were underrepresented. No study primarily focused on social and relational needs.

Discussion. Current literature mainly addresses measurable clinical outcomes, while social and work reintegration, relationships, and self-management remain overlooked. More Italian research, experimental studies on nursing interventions, and more equitable sampling are needed. Oncology nurses should play a central role in developing integrated, evidence-based care models responsive to survivors' multidimensional needs.

Keywords: Cancer Survivorship, Patient Needs, Patient-Reported Outcomes

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