

## Abstract

# Informal Peer Support Network for Oncology Nursing Research: From Training Experience to Initial Mentoring Services

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**Introduction.** The integration of scientific evidence into nursing practice relies on robust disciplinary research. In peripheral territories with limited access to nursing research doctoral programmes, developing innovative training models and peer-to-peer support networks represents a valuable opportunity. In 2025, oncology research methodology workshops were launched, revealing the need for a structured peer-support network. This study aimed to describe the development and initial activities of an informal oncology nursing research support network, created from the needs expressed by workshop participants.

**Methods.** During the second workshop, held in December 2025, an anonymous questionnaire was administered to participating nurses (n = 110) to explore perceived barriers across the research process, including protocol drafting, ethics committee submission, data collection, statistical analysis, and publication. Based on the results, an email-based advisory service was activated in 2026, connecting applicants with nurse researchers, biostatisticians, and professionals experienced in ethical and administrative procedures.

**Results.** The questionnaire identified major barriers in protocol writing (72%), ethics committee submission (88%), questionnaire administration (61%), data analysis (95%), manuscript drafting (80%), and securing publication funding (97%). In early 2026, the network received its first support requests for research protocol development from workshop participants, leading to the activation of tailored methodological and organisational mentoring. Additional training activities on scientific writing, basic statistics, and the ethical use of artificial intelligence in clinical research were also planned.

**Discussion.** This experience demonstrates how targeted training can evolve into an informal nursing research support network that complements the work of national scientific societies. The findings also reveal a clear demand for bottom-up territorial groups capable of building integrated networks with local organisations and promoting proximity, collaboration, and professional autonomy in oncology nursing. Formalising the model and standardising mentoring procedures represent the next steps towards sustainability and scalability.

**Keywords:** Oncology Nursing Research, Peer Support, Professional Development, Research

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## Mentorship

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