

“Comment on: An ethical imperative: safety and specialization as nursing priorities of WHO Global Initiative for Childhood Cancer”

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As we celebrate 2020 as the Year of the Nurse and the Midwife and recognize the Global Initiative for Childhood Cancer, members of the International Society of Pediatric Oncology (SIOP) Baseline Nursing Standards Taskforce would like to highlight advocacy efforts promoting the baseline nursing standards.^{1, 2} Your published article, *An ethical imperative: safety and specialization as nursing priorities of WHO Global Initiative for Childhood Cancer* (Pergert and colleagues) reveals the importance of ongoing efforts to support implementation of the Baseline Nursing Standards.³ Given that the majority of hospitals are not meeting the standards in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC), as well as some high-income countries (HIC),^{4, 5} advocacy initiatives are required to raise awareness of the need to meet these standards. During the COVID-19 pandemic, health facilities face new challenges in meeting the standards. To achieve the WHO global initiative’s goal to save one million children’s lives by 2030, it is important to continue efforts to address baseline nursing standards.

Pediatric oncology as a subspecialty requires a nursing workforce with specialized education and clinical skills to achieve optimal patient outcomes. Knowledge itself is not enough if nurses lack the resources and support to practice or implement appropriate nursing care in their work settings. The six Baseline Nursing Standards focus on key elements essential to delivering quality and safe care (Table 1). Collectively, they serve as a framework and foundation for positive pediatric oncology nursing practice environments internationally.

Advocacy efforts to disseminate the baseline standards are well established. To date, fourteen organizations have endorsed the Standards. Members of the SIOP PODC Nursing Working Group hosted a “Leadership and Advocacy Workshop: Disseminating the Baseline Nursing Standards” prior to the SIOP Conference in October 2017. Twenty-two pediatric hematology/oncology nurse leaders and four stakeholder-group representatives (parent, physicians, advocates) from 14 countries met and established goals and strategic priorities for advocacy of the standards. As a result, the Baseline Nursing Standards Advocacy Toolkit was developed and can be found on the SIOP Nursing Website <https://siop-online.org/baseline-nursing-standards-advocacy-toolkit>. The toolkit contains practical advocacy resources, including a PowerPoint presentation, an endorsement letter template, publications, podcasts, a social media campaign and examples of elevator speeches for each standard. Furthermore, the Standards have been featured in international presentations, such as a keynote presentation (S. Day) in SIOP Lyon, an award session and nursing abstract presentations at SIOP congresses and continental meetings.

To reach the WHO target of doubling the global childhood cancer survival rate to 60%, achievement of baseline nursing standards for pediatric oncology must be prioritized and appropriately resourced by hospital administrators, governments and other stakeholders. Amid a global pandemic where nursing resources are stretched, creative ways to support and advocate for implementation of the standards is needed. In

recognition of the recent publication by the Nurse Specialists of the Global Initiative for Childhood Cancer noting the baseline standards, now is the time to act and improve childhood and adolescent cancer outcomes through raising the standard of pediatric oncology nursing practice around the world.

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Table 1 for PBC Letter to the Editor.docx available at <https://authorea.com/users/344255/articles/470875--comment-on-an-ethical-imperative-safety-and-specialization-as-nursing-priorities-of-who-global-initiative-for-childhood-cancer>