

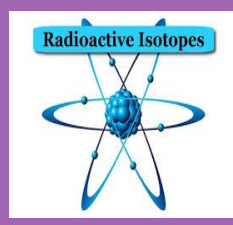
Invaluable insights and experiences of Australian Radiation Oncology Nurses (RON) are encapsulated in the title:



"The Voices of Australian Radiation Oncology Nurses"

RONs play a critical role in the support and treatment of cancer patients; their perspectives are essential to understanding the challenges and opportunities in the field of RON.

By listening to these voices, the aim is to improve the quality of care for those battling cancer in Australia.



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Introduction

In 2022 the Radiation Oncology Nurses (RON) Specialist Practice Network of the Cancer Nursing Society of Australia completed the first **national workforce study of RONs in Australia.**

Methods

Researcher-initiated questions sought responses to aspects of the RON role in six (6) distinct categories. The qualitative component describes responses and personal reflections on topics such as satisfaction with their work, role components, work practices, departmental tasks, education, career progression, and opportunities for advancement. Content analysis of the data was undertaken.

Results

A total of 140 RONs from public and private sectors provided 416 responses. Content analysis of the data resulted in seven (7) groups of responses reduced to codes and themes.

Positive Themes

- Finding RON role personally rewarding
- Enjoy spending time with patients
- Providing holistic care
- Feel sense of accomplishment in making positive difference in patients'/families' lives
- Appreciate working with colleagues
- Having autonomy in their work.
- Satisfied with outcomes of their interventions.
- Feel sense of accomplishment in making a positive difference in patients'/families' lives
- Appreciate working with colleagues
- Having autonomy in their work.
- Satisfied with outcomes of their interventions.

"Diversity of patients, treatments; working with a great team"
"Can build therapeutic relationships with patients"

Negative Themes

- RON role often underestimated; not well understood by nursing management, other healthcare professionals
- Many administrative, cleaning, stock management tasks could be handled by other staff members
- Lack of formal RON education at national level: a concern for many respondents
- Limited opportunities for career advancement in the RON field

"RONs often less valued than chemotherapy nurses"
"Improve communication between treating teams and nursing"

Conclusion

This study showed that RON provides high work satisfaction with ability to provide holistic patient care. Many RONs felt thatt much nursing time was spent on non-nursing tasks. The lack of formal post-graduate RON education was an issue for many RONs.

"Need a role definition for RON"
"This research a positive step to develop a rostering model for Radiation Oncology"

