

Sylvester's Nurse Practitioner Oncology Fellowship Program Earns Accreditation

The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) has issued an Accreditation with Distinction to the oncology fellowship program developed for nurse practitioners at Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine.



From left, Maritza Alencar, D.N.P., MBA, APRN, with Jessica MacIntyre, MSN, APRN.

The program, launched in November of 2016, was the first of its kind in Florida. It is now being recognized for its “programmatically excellence” by the ANCC Commission on Accreditation.

“Nurse practitioners play an essential role in the care of the oncology patient,” said Sylvester Director Stephen D. Nimer, M.D. “They provide caring, compassion and education, and they are dedicated advocates for exemplary patient care, guiding patients through their treatment process. We are proud to provide such an important program at the cancer center.”

Sylvester’s program entails a year-long rotation through hematology/oncology and other specialties that interact with oncology patients to provide a multidisciplinary curriculum. The program has expanded to include a psychosocial oncology, stem cell transplant and cellular therapy fellowship track for nurse practitioners.

“Unfortunately, many nurse practitioners are not specialized after graduation or lack experience in areas like oncology,” said Jessica MacIntyre, MSN, APRN, Sylvester’s executive director of clinical operations and co-director of the new fellowship program.

To date, Sylvester’s program has graduated one nurse practitioner oncology fellow, Amber Thomassen, APRN, AGNP-BC. Currently there are three more in the program with two on track to graduate in the spring.



Amber Thomassen, APRN, AGNP-BC.

“Oncology is a highly specialized field of medicine, and formal training is fundamental in order to provide quality, efficient care,” said Maritza Alencar, D.N.P., MBA, APRN, director of clinical operations at Sylvester and the fellowship program’s other co-director.

An [article](#) published in April 2018 in the *Clinical Journal of Oncology Nursing*, written by Alencar, MacIntyre and other Sylvester authors, points out that there are less than a dozen oncology nurse practitioner fellowships in the United States. Accreditation is important in establishing national standards.

Sylvester is only the second nurse practitioner oncology fellowship program to receive accreditation by ANCC, which can be renewed every three years.