



## **2025 PHILIPPINE CANCER PATIENT NAVIGATION STANDARDS AND COMPETENCIES**

### **PURPOSE**

The **Patient Navigation Standards and Competencies** serve as a foundational guide for patient navigation services across all areas and levels of the Philippine healthcare system. This supports a unified national framework to guide training, supervision, professional development, and advocacy for patient navigation across the country. These standards aim to:

1. **Define the core functions and responsibilities** of patient navigators.
2. **Standardize navigation practices** across healthcare settings.
3. **Provide a foundation for training and capacity-building**, supporting both new and existing navigators in the acquisition of relevant knowledge, skills, and attitudes.
4. **Promote patient-centered, culturally competent, and equitable care**, especially for marginalized and vulnerable populations.
5. **Align navigator roles with national health policies and cancer control programs**, including Republic Act No. 11215 (National Integrated Cancer Control Act).
6. **Strengthen the professional identity and recognition** of patient navigators as essential members of the healthcare workforce.

### **SCOPE**

These standards and competencies apply to all types of Philippine cancer patient navigators including, but not limited to, hospital navigators, community navigators, cancer-specific navigators, Cancer and Supportive-Palliative Medicines Access Program navigators, facility navigators, nurse navigators, peer navigators, and volunteer navigators. These standards apply across roles, setting, and patient needs, ensuring relevance in the practice of the profession regardless of the setting of service-provision.



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## DOMAIN 1: PROFESSIONALISM AND ETHICS

Definition: Refers to the navigator's commitment to demonstrate integrity, ethical conduct, accountability, and professionalism in alignment with national laws, cultural values, and standards of care

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| <b>1</b> | Demonstrate compassion, respect, and empathy while upholding the dignity, worth, and unique qualities of every person, with the patient's well-being as the primary commitment and the family recognized as an essential partner in care   |
| <b>2</b> | Demonstrate culturally sensitive and respectful interactions with patients, families, and the healthcare team, honoring diverse backgrounds, identities, and values.   |
| <b>3</b> | Promote and protect patients' and families' rights, privacy, and safety by upholding ethical and legal standards, including confidentiality, informed consent, resolution of conflicts of interest, and compliance with relevant laws and policies such as the Data Privacy Act of 2012. |
| <b>4</b> | Maintain clear professional boundaries in alignment with education, training, scope of practice, and role as a patient navigator.  |
| <b>5</b> | Recognize and report suspected abuse, neglect, or imminent risk to safety in accordance with institutional policies and national laws to uphold patient protection and professional responsibility.  |
| <b>6</b> | Demonstrate accountability in fulfilling navigator responsibilities to patients, the care team, the profession, and the community.   |

## DOMAIN 2: COMMUNICATION AND INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION

Definition: Encompasses the ability to communicate clearly and empathetically with patients, families, and the care team while fostering trust, cultural sensitivity, and effective collaboration across disciplines and sectors

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| <b>1</b> | Adapt health education and patient-facing communication to the individual's language, cultural background, developmental stage, and health literacy level to promote understanding, engagement, and informed participation in care   |
| <b>2</b> | Communicate effectively and empathetically with patients, families, and the interdisciplinary team by using active listening skills, building trust, adapting to literacy and cultural contexts, supporting shared decision-making, and navigating difficult conversations |
| <b>3</b> | Collaborate with patients, families, caregivers, and the interdisciplinary team in ways that foster mutual respect, cultural humility, ethical integrity, and trust, while keeping the patient at the center of care   |
| <b>4</b> | Facilitate conflict resolution among patients, family members, community partners and members of the interdisciplinary team in a professional and culturally acceptable manner   |



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### DOMAIN 3: CARE COORDINATION AND PATIENT SUPPORT

Definition: Focuses on assessing patient and family needs, reducing barriers, supporting empowerment, and ensuring timely, person-centered access to resources and services across the cancer care continuum

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| <b>1</b> | Conduct distress screening and assess practical, financial, physical, emotional, psychosocial, and spiritual barriers to care. Accurately document findings and ensure timely referral to appropriate support services to promote adherence to the care plan.                               |
| <b>2</b> | Coordinate the holistic patient-centered plan of care by defining the navigator's role, advocating for patients' and families' needs, and working with the interdisciplinary team to ensure timely referrals, continuity of care, and follow-up during each episode and transition of care. |
| <b>3</b> | Build and sustain collaborative relationships with organizational, community, and national partners to expand resource networks and improve access for patients and families experiencing barriers or distress.   |
| <b>4</b> | Understand healthcare costs and financing, and support patients with financial barriers by identifying and referring to appropriate financial and insurance resources   |
| <b>5</b> | Educate and empower patients and families by strengthening their ability to actively participate in and to advocate for their care.   |
| <b>6</b> | Educate and empower patients and families on organizing and managing their personal health records to support autonomy, active participation, and shared decision-making  |

### DOMAIN 4: SYSTEM AND ORGANIZATIONAL KNOWLEDGE

Definition: Involves understanding health systems, organizational structures, policies, and quality processes to effectively navigate services, support program improvement, and enhance care delivery

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| <b>1</b> | Understand the organization's structure, mission, vision, and strategic priorities.   |
| <b>2</b> | Demonstrate awareness of and responsiveness to the broader healthcare system by staying informed on laws, regulations, payment models, and policies that impact patient care and navigation services                                      |
| <b>3</b> | Demonstrate digital literacy by effectively using health information systems, documentation tools, and navigation technologies to support care coordination, data reporting, and communication with stakeholders.                         |
| <b>4</b> | Contribute to the design, implementation, and evaluation of patient navigation programs by promoting the navigator role and strengthening links across healthcare and community systems   |
| <b>5</b> | Use patient navigation outcomes (e.g. reduced barriers, improved experiences, increased resource access) to support quality improvement initiatives and promote navigation programs that are safe, effective, equitable, and sustainable. |



## DOMAIN 5: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMPETENCE

Definition: Refers to the navigator’s responsibility to build, maintain, and enhance their personal knowledge, formal qualifications, and professional capacity through continuous learning, certification, and resilience-building practices

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| <b>1</b> | Maintain required education, training, licensure, or certification appropriate to the navigator role.  |
| <b>2</b> | Demonstrate foundational knowledge of cancer care, including its terminology, screening, diagnostic, and treatment options, supportive and palliative care, psychosocial and spiritual support, clinical trials, health system operations, and available resources.                  |
| <b>3</b> | Demonstrate the ability to access, apply, and integrate evidence-based information into navigation practice. When appropriate, contribute to research using ethical and culturally appropriate methods that support reliable and valid outcomes                                      |
| <b>4</b> | Demonstrate personal accountability for professional growth by setting learning goals, engaging in regular self-evaluation, integrating feedback, seeking supervision, and staying aligned with professional standards, ethics, and best practices.                                  |
| <b>5</b> | Recognize and uphold self-care as a professional and ethical responsibility by practicing self-awareness, stress management, healthy coping strategies, and timely use of support systems to sustain resilience and reduce risk of burnout, compassion fatigue, and secondary trauma |

## DOMAIN 6: ADVOCACY AND EQUITY

Definition: Centers on promoting the rights and voices of patients, families, and communities, while championing health equity, systems improvement, and the patient navigation profession

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| <b>1</b> | Advocate for the patient navigation profession by promoting its value, articulating its role and responsibilities to patients, healthcare providers, organizational leaders, and the broader community, demonstrating its positive impact on patient experience and outcomes  |
| <b>2</b> | Advocate for laws, policies, and system-level changes that protect and promote the needs of patients, eliminate health disparities, support health equity, and strengthen services and resources within healthcare systems and communities by contributing a navigation perspective to institutional, community, and policy decision-making |