

APOSW 2021  
VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

44<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE



# VIRTUALLY TOGETHER

LESSONS OF SUPPORT, COMMUNITY AND BEING  
ESSENTIAL IN PEDIATRIC ONCOLOGY SOCIAL WORK

APRIL 12-14, 2021



# A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT-ELECT

Welcome to the APOSW 2021 Conference, virtual edition. This year our conference theme is ***Virtually Together: Lessons of Support, Community, and Being Essential in Pediatric Oncology Social Work***. Our conference last year was derailed like so many things, but we are thrilled to connect again. As social workers we are essential and I am hopeful this conference can provide an avenue for connection that helps us support one another. This conference will provide opportunities to learn, network, and return to your centers rejuvenated.

The Board of Directors along with the Conference Chairperson have been hard at work to bring you a conference that features speakers who are leaders in their field. You will gain new skills, tools, and information which will support and enhance your clinical practice. Participants tell us each year that they are inspired throughout conference and we expect you will be too!

Our keynote speaker, Dr. Maria Sirois, is an inspirational speaker, consultant, and licensed psychologist who has worked in the fields of resilience and positive psychology for more than twenty years. As a positive psychologist, she focuses on the capacity of the human spirit particularly when under chronic stress, during significant transitions, and/or feeling the shock of wholesale change.

Additionally, Dr. Prasanna Ananth will share a timely presentation about medical marijuana and pediatric oncology. We are also honored to have Reverend Mary Katherine Tate who will give us an intriguing look into patient and family centered care for the LGBTQ+ Community. As an added bonus, Christina Bach will present on the ethics of social work practice in the digital age. This speaker line up is extremely knowledgeable and engaging, and are experts in their respective fields. I am thrilled to share this conference with you! A special thank you to the Abstract Review Committee – Tara DeJohn, Arlene Brown, Heather DeRousee, and Sonia Luccetta. Their diligence and thoughtfulness in reviewing the many abstracts for presentations and posters which were submitted this year is most appreciated.



Looking forward to connecting with you in our new virtual world!

*Michelle Fritsch*

Michelle Fritsch, LMSW-ACP  
APOSW President-Elect



APOSW 2021  
VIRTUAL CONFERENCE



# APOSW 2021

## VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

## CONFERENCE GOAL

To provide a collaborative learning opportunity for oncology social workers to address the needs of families impacted by childhood cancer.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this conference, participants will be able to:

- Explain and apply social work theory, evidence-based practice, interventions, and techniques to address psychosocial care, barriers to care, and programmatic needs of pediatric patients and family members from diagnosis through survivorship, and into the bereavement process.
- Describe evidence-based practice to support pediatric cancer patients and their families through discussions of research studies, outcomes, and recommendations in the field of pediatric oncology social work.
- Identify and discuss the psychosocial needs of children diagnosed with cancer and their families toward compassionate end-of-life care, healing and future positive growth.
- Evaluate methods for professional development through leadership.





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APOSW would like to recognize the **Leukemia & Lymphoma Society** as our first ever Diamond Sponsor at the \$15,000 level!

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APPLICATIONS DUE MARCH 8, 2021

# THE HOUSTON TYLER ROTHSCCHILD SCHOLARSHIP FUND

*The Houston Tyler Rothschild Scholarship Fund* is intended to supplement other funding in order to enable selected members to attend the conference. The scholarship may be applied to conference registration. Application forms are available [online](#).

If you have questions,  
please contact

Stephanie Fooks-Parker, MSW, LSW, OSW-C  
APOSW Immediate Past President

✉ [fooks@chop.edu](mailto:fooks@chop.edu)





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# IMPORTANT DATES

MARCH 8

*Houston Tyler Rothschild Scholarship  
Application Deadline*

MARCH 29

*Cancellations must be submitted in  
writing by this date to receive a refund  
less a \$100 processing fee*

APRIL 11

*Pre-Institute Conference Session*

APRIL 12-14

*Virtual Conference*



# QUESTIONS?



## REGISTRATION

**Mary Laliberte, LCSW**  
*Treasurer*

Connecticut Children's Medical Center  
Phone: (860) 545-9620  
mlalibe@connecticutchildrens.org



## CE/AUDIO-VISUAL & CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

**Nicole Ellis, MSW, LSW, OSW-C**  
*Education & Professional Development Chair*

Penn Medicine, Dept. of Radiation Oncology  
Phone: (215) 615-5603  
nicole.ellis@pennmedicine.upenn.edu



## SPONSORS & EXHIBITORS

**Hollee Muller, MSW, LMSW, LCSW**  
*Conference Chair*

Children's Mercy Kansas City  
Phone: (816) 654-6125  
hamuller@cmh.edu



## SPEAKERS

**Michelle Fritsch, LMSW-ACP**  
*President-Elect*

Texas Children's Cancer and Hematology Centers  
Phone: (832) 824-6665  
Mxfritsc@texaschildrens.org



## MEMBERSHIP

**Beth Gomez, LCSW, OSW-C**  
*Membership Chair*

Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage  
Phone: (630) 933-1858  
Beth.gomez@nm.org

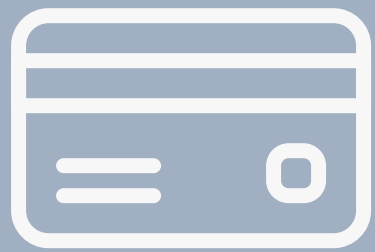
## Continuing Education

Application for conference program CE contact hours has been made by APOSW (Provider #886400741) through the National Association of Social Workers (national office). Attendees are responsible for reviewing whether their state accepts these CE contact hours. APOSW is also recognized by the New York State Education Department's State Board for Social Work as an approved provider of continuing education for licensed social workers (#SW-0441). Social workers will receive up to 16 clinical CE contact hours for this activity. Upon completion of this program and submission of the CE activity evaluation, a certificate of completion will be issued to attendees via email within 30 days.

## Cancellation Policy

To accommodate unexpected emergencies, we will accept notification of cancellations up to 10 business days prior to the start of the conference (March 29th, 2021). Cancellations must be sent in writing via email to [info@aposw.org](mailto:info@aposw.org). Refunds will be issued less a \$100 processing fee.

# CONFERENCE DETAILS



## Conference Pricing

### Virtual Conference Fees

- Full conference registration members - \$250
- Full conference registration non-member - \$375
- One day registration - \$125

### Student rates

- Full conference registration member - \$100
- Full conference registration non-member - \$200



## Online Registration

All conference registration is done via the APOSW website. Secure [online registration](#) is available for both credit card and pay by check options.



## Conference Access

Information on accessing our virtual conference platform, WHOVA, will be sent via email closer to the conference date. Therefore, please ensure that the email used during registration is the email address that you wish to receive all conference information.



## Time Zone

Times listed on all conference materials will be listed in Eastern Standard Time (EST).

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For more information, questions, or assistance for people with disabilities, please email [info@aposw.org](mailto:info@aposw.org).

*APOSW presents their speakers as an educational service. It has not confirmed the accuracy and efficacy of any of the information in their presentations.*



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# PRESENTATION SCHEDULE



## VIRTUALLY TOGETHER

LESSONS OF SUPPORT, COMMUNITY AND BEING  
ESSENTIAL IN PEDIATRIC ONCOLOGY SOCIAL WORK



## SUNDAY, APRIL 11, 2021

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM PRE-INSTITUTE 1 (1.5 CE's)

### *An Introduction to Pediatric Hematology Oncology Social Work*

**Caley Nelson, LMSW, OSW-C**

Phoenix Children's Hospital  
Phoenix, AZ

Regardless of how long you have been a social worker, there are aspects unique to the role of a Pediatric Oncology Social Worker. This session is designed for social workers new to the field of pediatric oncology. Evidence-informed practice topics reviewed will include: the role of social work within an interdisciplinary team, relapse related issues, palliative care/end of life, ethical issues, as well as topics and case examples raised by participants in the session. Participants will have opportunities to network, share their personal experiences and engage in dynamic small group discussions. Participants will also learn exciting opportunities to engage and get involved with APOSW that will build professional and leadership skills within the field of pediatric oncology social work. This is a great opportunity to interact and network with others new to APOSW and new to pediatric oncology social work.

#### Learning Objectives:

1. Describe the unique aspects of providing clinical social work to pediatric oncology patients and their families.
2. Discuss the challenges social workers face when working on an interdisciplinary medical team.
3. Explain the ethical and other challenges faced when providing care to families at the end of life.
4. Articulate the benefits of ongoing involvement with APOSW as it relates to building professional and leadership skills.

## DAY 1 - MONDAY, APRIL 12, 2021

10:30 AM – 11:00 AM CONFERENCE OPENING

- **Opening Remarks - Elyse Levin-Russman, LICSW, OSW-C**  
2020-2022 APOSW President  
Massachusetts General Hospital  
Boston, MA
- **Instructions on Continuing Education Credits & WHOVA - Nicole Ellis, LSW, OSW-C**  
2020-2022 Education and Professional Development Chair  
Penn Medicine  
Philadelphia, PA
- **Keynote Introductory Remarks - Leukemia & Lymphoma Society**

11:00 AM – 12:30 PM KEYNOTE (1.5 CE's)

### *Resilient Leadership in Uncertain Times*

**Maria Sirois, Psy.D**

Lecturer, Consultant  
Lenox, MA

Our capacity to adapt to difficult, if not excruciating moments, rests on our ability to transform stress into opportunity and to leverage our strengths, while integrating positive moments of connection and of self-care. This is where the science of positive psychology and the study of resilient leadership are in full accord. In our work together, we will discuss the intersection between positivity and resilience, practice fast skills to uplevel capacity at work and at home, and uncover where we can best put our limited time and attention in order to move the dial of our own blurred work/life experience toward less fatigue and greater wellbeing.

#### Learning Objectives:

1. Define how positivity influences resilient capacity.
2. Apply character strengths to moments of stress/conflict and opportunity.
3. Practice cultivating positive connection on behalf of patients, colleagues and one's own self-care.

**12:30 PM – 1:00 PM      LUNCH WITH THE EXHIBITORS**

Grab your lunch and come back online to meet with some of this year's exhibitors. This is an interactive opportunity to participate in a live chat, watch a video, or ask questions. Visit with the programs you work with all year, and discover new programs to take back to your institution. Your participation will also earn you a chance to win a free membership to APOSW.

**1:00 PM – 2:00 PM      BREAKOUT SESSION 1 (1 CE)**

***1A: Bearing Witness: A Narrative Medicine Approach to Self-Care for Healthcare Professionals***

**Kathy Riley, MPH, CHES**

Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation  
Asheville, NC

A theoretical and practical exploration of the principles of narrative medicine combined with a case study and practice applying these principles to the self-care of session participants. Drawing on the practice of the close reading of literature and reflection through writing, healthcare professionals gain fresh insights into their own stories and in turn connect in meaningful ways to the stories of illness in their patients (Charon, 2001).

Learning Objectives:

1. The attendee will describe how the principles of narrative medicine are utilized for self-care.
2. The attendee will recall the benefits of a case study in narrative medicine with pediatric brain tumor families.
3. The attendee will demonstrate knowledge of narrative medicine principles.

**1:00 PM – 2:00 PM      BREAKOUT SESSION 1 (1 CE)**

***1B: Creativity Out of Chaos: Lessons Learned from Designing, Implementing, and Adapting a Parent Support Program Before and During a Global Pandemic***

**Larissa Hewitt, MSW, LICSW**

**Quintana B. Carter, MA**

**Kelsey Hamstead, MSW, LCSW**

**Anna C. Muriel, MD, MPH**

Dana-Farber Cancer Institute  
Boston, MA

**Esmeralda Adolf, MA**

University of Colorado Denver  
Denver, CO

This presentation will discuss the steps taken to systematically design and pilot a new psycho-educational program for parents in our clinic. We will also provide an in-depth exploration of barriers to parent participation despite expressed interest in connecting with and learning from other parents. Attention will be paid to parent support in the time of a global pandemic and identifying ways in which barriers can be addressed with creative problem-solving, and the use of technology.

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe the literature base supporting psychoeducation for parents in pediatric oncology.
2. Identify the steps and potential stakeholders needed to launch a parent support initiative in your own setting.
3. Recognize barriers to new programmatic initiatives and utilize creative problem-solving and technology to respond to these challenges.



2:00 PM – 2:15 PM BREAK

2:15 PM – 3:15 PM BREAKOUT SESSION 2 (1 CE)

2A: Zoom Versus Room: New Adventures in Group Work in Pediatric Oncology Practice

**Nancy Cincotta, LCSW, MSW, MPhil**  
Psychosocial Consultant  
New York, NY

Group work in pediatric oncology is antithetical to social distancing and has required redirection during the COVID-19 pandemic. What are the challenges, the strengths, and differences in Zoom groups? In this session we will integrate our experiences with group work with what have learned about working in Zoom, and help each other refine our skills while conceptualizing a novel model. Literature and activities will be explored including: The Elephant in the Zoom, Celebrations of Light, Collective Art.

Learning Objectives:

- 1. Be able to conceptualize group work skills.
- 2. Identify in person skills as they translate to zoom skills.
- 3. Integrate skills and knowledge learned about zoom work.
- 4. Conceptualize about a zoom group model.
- 5. Utilize creative zoom activities.

2B: The Discussion of Hope and Denial: Psychosocial Considerations in the Treatment of Cancer Patients and their Families

**Deborah B Berk, MSW**  
Dana Farber Cancer Institute  
Boston, MA

**Steven A. Berk, Ph.D.**  
Bond & Berk Associates  
Waltham, MA

The therapeutic management of hope and denial is a critical element in the psychosocial care of cancer patients and their families. The clinician’s role as a “dispenser” of hope is articulated along with a framework for evaluating the types of denial that may be present during different phases of cancer treatment. The clinical management of these coping strategies is also provided through the use of case illustrations.

Learning Objectives:

- 1. Understand the intersection of hope and denial in the psychosocial treatment of cancer patients and their families.
- 2. Increase knowledge of the type of denial that may be observed in cancer patients and their families.
- 3. Recognize how hope and denial may be expressed during different phases of cancer treatment.
- 4. Acquire additional techniques for the management of the intersection of hope and denial.

3:15 PM – 3:30 PM BREAK



3:30 PM – 4:30 PM      BREAKOUT SESSION 3 (1 CE)

**3A: *How Long Can I Last? Developing Strategies for Sustaining and Growing as a Pediatric Oncology Social Worker***

**Elyse Levin-Russman, MSW, LICSW, OSW-C**

Massachusetts General Hospital  
Boston, MA

**Heather Oakley, MSW, LCSW, OSW-C**

University of Florida Health Proton Therapy Institute  
Jacksonville, FL

This interactive session will look at stressors in the work environment while also considering ways to create opportunities for growth and development. Joined by a panel of Social Work clinicians, we will explore how others have found ways to enhance job satisfaction, consider alternative career paths and find continued meaning in the work that we do. The role of APOSW in supporting members professional work and goals will be reviewed.

Learning Objectives:

1. Offer an overview of the literature looking at components of Social Work job satisfaction as well as the risk of compassion fatigue and burnout.
2. Consider the impact of COVID19 on Pediatric Oncology Social Work practice.
3. Describe opportunities for enhancing a clinician's work environment through engagement with community programs include APOSW.
4. Learn how Social Work clinicians have each navigated their own unique careers in Pediatric Oncology.

**3B: *Advocating for Sibling Stem Cell Donors: Hearing their Voices***

**Nancy Barbach, MSW, LCSW, OSW-C**

Cohen Children's Medical Center  
New Hyde Park, NY

**Wendy Pelletier, MSW, RSW**

Alberta Children's Hospital  
Calgary, Canada

**Lori Wiener, PhD, DCSW**

National Cancer Institute  
Bethesda, MD

This session will share presenters' experiences to address protecting interests of identified donors as they prepare to provide stem cells for their ill sibling. Literature addressing the scope and history of this issue will be reviewed, as well as results of a recent international survey examining sibling donor practices. Different program models will be shared along with findings from a pilot sibling donor psychosocial intervention. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on these processes will be included. Discussion will focus on these themes and on the role of social work to standardize the psychosocial care of pediatric donors prior to, during and post stem cell donation.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify the current status of sibling donor assessment and surveillance practices.
2. Recognize the unmet needs of sibling donors.
3. Describe models of intervention aimed at this vulnerable population.

**4:30 PM – 5:30 PM     POSTER PRESENTATIONS/HAPPY HOUR**

Grab a drink and join us for our interactive poster session. You will have the opportunity to talk with presenters, pick up handouts, and socialize with other attendees.

***P1: Improving Healthcare Provider Support through Structured Bereavement Programming***

**Stephanie Aaron, MSW, LCSW**

**Katy Howe, MSW, LCSW**

**Jessica King, MSW, LCSW**

**Anna Nannicelli, MPH, LCSW, OSW-C**

Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago  
Chicago, IL

Pediatric oncology programs regularly provide bereavement support to families after the death of a child to cancer. However, the same standard of support is rarely offered to healthcare providers experiencing the loss of a patient. In 2019, the pediatric oncology social work team at Lurie Children’s created and implemented bereavement programming to improve staff support which has evolved to fit social distancing requirements.

***P2: Social Media Use By Adolescent & Young Adult Cancer Patients***

**YoungJae Lee, LCSW**

**Burton Appel, MD, MBA**

Hackensack Meridian Health  
Hackensack, NJ

AYAs treated in a pediatric oncology center in New Jersey discussed their social media use in focus groups. Subjects answered questions posed by the moderators and engaged in open discussion. AYAs with cancer utilize SM in different ways including: social connections, researching medical needs, expressing feelings, personal enjoyment and distraction during treatment. Many AYAs are influenced by parents’ use of SM. Most AYAs desire connecting with clinicians via SM after, but not during, treatment.

***P3: Stages of AYA: Re-examining the age range for the adolescent and young adult oncology population and how it affects programs for support***

**Devon Ciampa, MSW, LMSW**

Johns Hopkins Children’s Center  
Baltimore, MD

The AYA oncology population includes patients ages 15 to 39 years of age in the United States. Within that age range, there are several developmental stages as well as various life experiences and milestones that affect a patient’s relationship with their disease and their psychosocial needs such as emotional support. AYA support groups and activities must consider these differences when planning and implementing programs in order to provide the best care for this unique population.

***P4: Creating a Legacy for Patients Diagnosed with DIPG or High Grade Brian Tumors***

**Wanda Meriwether, MSW,LSW**

**Bridget Kikta, MSW, LSW**

**Kathleen McEwen, BM,MS,MT-BC,CCLS**

Cincinnati Children’s Hospital  
Cincinnati, OH

This poster presentation will educate clinicians about “Diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma” (DIPG)/High Grade tumors. We will show how social work collaborated with child life and the medical team to develop a standard of care/protocol to help establish personalized, well rounded psychosocial care to patients as they navigate this devastating diagnosis that has poor survival rate. The presentation will outline the protocol and give examples of how it has positively impacted patient care.



## DAY 2 - TUESDAY, APRIL 13, 2021

11:00 AM – 12:15 PM    **INTENSIVE 1 - Ethics (1.25 CEs)**

### *Social Work Practice in the Digital Age: Technology, Social Media and Ethics*

**Christina Bach, MSW, MBE, LCSW, OSW-C, FAOSW**

Psychosocial Content Editor, Oncolink.org

Community Navigator & Financial Navigation Specialist, Cancer Support Community Helpline

Field Liaison/Instructor, University of Pennsylvania School of Social Policy and Practice Philadelphia, PA

In January of 2018, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) implemented the first revision of its Code of Ethics (“the Code”) since 1996. As social work practice methods have evolved in the past 20 years, so has the need to further define ethical principles and standards for delivery of care. In its latest iteration, 20 sections of “the Code” were revised. For the first time “the Code” specifically includes how social workers utilize technology ethically in their practice, with specific emphasis on informed consent, avoiding conflicts of interest, and maintaining client confidentiality. Now, three years and a pandemic later, social workers use of technology, social media and telehealth continues to evolve in response to changing needs and places where the work is happening.

Social workers, regardless of membership in NASW, are held accountable to ethical standards included in “the code.” It is imperative that we are familiar with the principles and standards put forth by “the code,” as it helps us to avoid potential malpractice and elevates the high ethical practice standards employed in our daily interactions with clients, families, systems, organizations and policy. This session will provide a review of the changes to “the code” and their application to the daily practice of an oncology social worker.

We will also examine how our code works with health care systems and ethical practices of other members of the interdisciplinary team. This presentation will also address the changes in our practice brought about by the pandemic and challenge participants to think about their potential to advocate for long term ethical practice, licensure and policy changes that will help us better serve our clients.

#### Learning Objectives:

1. Synthesize the 2018 updates to the NASW Code of Ethics with particular attention on the convergence of social work practice and technology.
2. Understand safe internet usage for social work professionals and for our clients.
3. Review the impact of technology on confidentiality, privacy, self-determination, boundaries and dual relationships.
4. Guide patients/clients through safe internet practices and understanding/maintaining of working relationships with care providers.
5. Understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the delivery of social work services, telehealth and ethical practice.

**12:15 PM – 1:00 PM    LUNCH WITH EXHIBITORS**

Grab your lunch and come back online to meet with some of this year’s exhibitors. This is an interactive opportunity to participate in a live chat, watch a video, or ask questions. Visit with the programs you work with all year, and discover new programs to take back to your institution. Your participation will also earn you a chance to win a free membership to APOSW.



**1:00 PM – 2:00 PM      BREAKOUT SESSION 4 (1 CE)**

**4A: Changing Our Perspective on Resource Distribution**

**Michelle Fritsch, LCSW**

Texas Children's Cancer and Hematology Centers  
Houston, TX

This presentation will assist social workers in assessing if the current resource distribution systems are efficient, effective and equitable. An example of a full analysis of a resource distribution process will be presented.

Learning Objectives:

1. An increased knowledge of the systematic process to review resource distribution process.
2. An increased understanding of how the overall review of how the resources are distributed and organized can affect the entire process.
3. An increased awareness of how to systematically assess if the current resource distribution systems are efficient, effective and equitable.
4. An increased passion for the methods in which we help families to get the resources they need.
5. An increased knowledge of how using a systematic approach would be beneficial to the families, the social worker and ultimately be more effective overall.

**4B: Zooming into the World of Virtual Support Groups – Providing on-line connections, not just during Quarantine**

**Stephanie Freeman, LICSW, EdM**

**Jessica Elder, LMSW, LCSW – NY**

**Regina Karchner, LICSW**

**Kate Shafer, MSW**

**Stacia Wagner, MSW**

Children's Brain Tumor Foundation  
New York, New York

For ten years, Children's Brain Tumor Foundation has been providing online opportunities for survivors and families to connect. Virtual groups run by social workers offer a chance to discuss coping strategies, stress reduction, and grief. They provide access to fun activities regardless of location. When quarantine began, in-person groups became virtual and additional groups formed. Despite the challenges of virtual groups, CBTF strives to meet survivor and family needs through unique opportunities for mutual support.

Learning Objectives:

1. Attendees will increase their understanding of the benefits of clinical and support online family programs.
2. Attendees will learn the challenges of clinical and support online family programs.
3. Attendees will engage in a conversation about the ethics and consent issues related to on-line programming.
4. Attendees will learn about a variety of options for platforms and online program types.
5. Attendees will learn the pros and cons of family members as co-facilitators.

**2:00 PM – 2:15 PM      BREAK**

2:15 PM – 3:15 PM      BREAKOUT SESSION 5 (1 CE)

**5A I lose My Son Every Cycle: A Mother's Reflection on Steroids and How Listening for Ambiguous Loss Can Inform Therapeutic Intervention**

**Anna Deering, MSW, LCSW**  
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute  
Boston, MA

Losses that lack a clear beginning and end, are ongoing, and may not be recognized by society are ubiquitous in the lives of patients and families navigating cancer diagnosis and treatment. This presentation will understand these “ambiguous” losses through the exploration of a case in which a mother struggled with “losing” her son each time he began a new cycle of steroids. We will then discuss relevant interventions and approaches for working with ambiguous loss.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify ambiguous losses as they present in the lives of patients and families undergoing cancer treatment.
2. Articulate the therapeutic value of identifying ambiguous loss in work with patients and families.
3. Provide supportive interventions for working with patients and families experiencing ambiguous loss.

**5B Navigating a Terminal Diagnosis during a Pandemic: Weighing the Risks and Benefits of Social Distancing for Pediatric Cancer Patients**

**Laura L Moynihan, MSW, LICSW**  
Hasbro Children's Hospital  
Providence, RI

**Rebecca MacDonell-Yilmaz, MD, MPH**  
Brown University, Hope Health  
Providence, RI

Healthcare teams have faced unique challenges while providing care to patients and their families since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Balancing a patient's values, wishes, and goals with the strict social distancing restrictions in place has proved to be particularly challenging. Weighing the risks and benefits of isolation is imperative when working with patients with poor prognoses and multidisciplinary teams must engage patients and families in these discussions.

Learning Objectives:

1. Consider ways that the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted patients and families in pediatric oncology.
2. Analyze how the pandemic has impacted the care that multidisciplinary teams provide to patients.
3. Engage team members to think critically about the risks and benefits of social distancing, particularly for patients with poor prognoses.
4. Apply lessons learned about patient quality of life to situations beyond the pandemic.

3:15 PM – 3:30 PM      BREAK



3:30 PM – 4:45 PM     INTENSIVE 2 (1.25 CEs)

Introductory Remarks by The Andrew McDonough B+ Foundation

*Medical Marijuana in Pediatric Oncology—Controversies and Practical Strategies for Social Workers*

**Prasanna Ananth, MD, MPH**  
Yale School of Medicine

In this talk, background will be provided on medical marijuana legalization throughout the US and the ways in which children and families facing cancer are impacted by these laws. This will include a discussion of known risks versus benefits, as well as an overview of the major controversies that arise in recommending or sanctioning medical marijuana use. Original data on multidisciplinary providers’ perspectives and on the views of patients and parents will be shared. Importantly, concrete strategies will be offered to use in responding to patient inquiries about medical marijuana.

Learning Objectives:

- 1. Discuss the impact of increased access to medical marijuana on children with cancer and their families.
- 2. Review original research findings suggesting pervasive openness to medical marijuana, as well as many widely held misconceptions about its utility.
- 3. Discuss what social workers can say and do in response to inquiries about medical marijuana from patients or family members.

4:45 PM     PRESENTATION OF SOCIAL WORK AWARDS

Sponsored by the Children’s Brain Tumor Foundation

**Stacia Wagner, MSW**  
President, Children’s Brain Tumor Foundation

**Stephanie Fooks-Parker, LSW, OSW-C**  
Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia  
Philadelphia, PA

DAY 3 - WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14, 2021

9:30 AM -- 10:45 AM     INTENSIVE 3 (1.25 CEs)

*A 20/20 View of Genetics and Genomics: Bridging Personalized Medicine and the Role of Pediatric Social Work*

**Gwen Nichols, MD**  
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society

**Jennifer Levine, MD, MSW**  
New York-Presbyterian Hospital  
Weill Cornell Medicine

**Kelly Laschinger, MSN, RN, CPNP**  
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society

**Melissa Komlosi, MSN, RN, CPNP**  
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society

Pediatric social workers must remain up-to-date on the advancements in precision medicine in order to provide the necessary psychosocial support to families struggling with: anxiety and depression, uncertainty, grief, family conflict, guilt, and emotional distress. Moreover, they must address deep seated beliefs associated with an individual’s perceived risk of developing cancer as well as cultural beliefs/barriers. Through presentation of a novel approach to genomics, this interactive session will bridge personalized medicine and the role of social workers.

Learning Objectives:

- 1. Provide a general overview of genetics and genomics in pediatric oncology.
- 2. Explain the implications of genomic testing on diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment management.
- 3. Describe the psychosocial implications and ethical considerations, including health disparities, equitable access and social justice.
- 4. Establish a plan for communication with family members and the healthcare team.



11:00 AM -12:15 PM     INTENSIVE 4 (1.25 CE's)

### *Patient & Family Centered Care Surrounding the LGBTQ+ Community*

**The Rev. Mary Katherine Tate**

Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters  
Norfolk, VA

This session will help participants to distinguish between sexual orientation, sexual behavior, gender identity and gender expression. Participants will be able to identify the unique challenges experienced by LGTIBQA patients, families, and staff and will develop an understanding of health disparities in the LGTIBQA community. The standards and policy related to the care of LGBTQ patients developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics will be discussed. We will explore what it means to be an "Ally" and develop strategies to implement a plan for an affirming clinical practice, including competent clinical spaces and best practices for communication. Participants will view taped interviews with LGTIBQA patients and their families, including transgender patients, homosexual parents, and a non-binary health care professional. We will explore health professional scenarios related to LGTIBQA patients, families and staff. Resources will be provided to aid in developing affirming clinical practices, "allyship", and identifying local community resources.

Learning Objectives:

1. Distinguish between sexual orientation, sexual behavior, gender identity and gender expression.
2. Identify the unique challenges and health disparities experienced by LGTBQ(N) patients and families.
3. Recall strategies for creating and affirming competent clinical spaces and communication with LGTBQ(N) patients and their families.
4. Identify what it means to be an "Ally" and develop a strategy to be an LGBTQ ally in your clinical practice.
5. Be familiar with AAP standards and policy related to the care of LGTBQ(N) youth.

12:15 PM – 1:00 PM     LUNCH WITH EXHIBITORS

Grab your lunch and come back online to meet with some of this year's exhibitors. This is an interactive opportunity to participate in a live chat, watch a video, or ask questions. Visit with the programs you work with all year, and discover new programs to take back to your institution. Your participation will also earn you a chance to win a free membership to APOSW.

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM     BREAKOUT SESSION 6 (1 CE)

### *6A: In the Discussion About Racism: You Matter*

**Denise Velazquez, LCSW**

**Raydale Blaylock, LCSW**

**Rigoberto Tomala, LMSW**

Children's Hospital of Montefiore  
Bronx, NY

This interactive presentation is inspired by the social contagion theory of behavior change – one person's behavior can change the behaviors of 1000 people. We review the implementation of the above intervention and identify the role that participants can play in recognizing and addressing racist behaviors, ideas, and policies. Using a biopsychosocial approach to shape the conversation, we provide relevant resources and definitions to provide an opportunity for incorporation of anti-racist efforts into everyday work.

Learning Objectives:

1. Articulate relevance of racism to the attendee's patients and communities.
2. Define relevant terms, phrases and social movements.
3. Recognize how racism negatively impacts health care.
4. Provide a format for feedback about racist behavior that can be delivered and received while remaining consistent with NASW ethical principles.
5. Demonstrate how to construct an individualized action plan to reduce workplace racism.

**6B: Sharing the Load: The Synergy of Partnership Between Hospital Social Workers and Community Providers in Psychosocial Oncology Care**

**Rachel Rogovin, MSW, LICSW**

Team IMPACT  
Foxboro, MA

**Zoe Artz, MSW, LSW**

Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia  
Philadelphia, PA

Social workers - the backbone of the psychosocial oncology team - serve as front line staff and provide the bulk of psychosocial support services to patients and families. But, they can share the load. Join us while we explore the benefits that enhanced partnership between hospital social workers and community organizations have on comprehensive psychosocial oncology care. Families benefit by improved access to services and wrap-around clinical care. Similarly, providers see reduced duplication of services, improved collaboration, efficiency and clinical outcomes.

Learning Objectives:

- 1. Identify three ways that increased partnership between hospital and community social workers improves psychosocial care.
- 2. Describe three best practices for hospital and community social workers to use when communicating about mutual client.
- 3. Discuss the spectrum of collaboration between hospital and community social workers.

**2:00 PM – 2:15 PM      BREAK**

**2:15 PM – 3:15 PM      BREAKOUT SESSION 7 (1 CE)**

**7A: Just Because You Carry It Well Doesn’t Mean It’s Not Heavy: How the Implementation of Recurring Wellness Groups Helps to Lighten the Load**

**Alexandra Finkel, LCSW**

New York Presbyterian - Weill Cornell  
New York, NY

A monthly resident wellness group was implemented to incorporate guided reflection time into the pediatric resident training program. Various modalities were used to engage participants and to foster introspection, self-care, and emotional/mental well being. Participants were highly engaged and reported that the groups helped to mitigate feelings of burnout, increase connection & decrease isolation, build morale & improve team culture, and promote well-being. The curriculum is widely applicable to other training programs.

Learning Objectives:

- 1. Identify benefits and rationale for establishing recurring wellness groups in the hospital setting.
- 2. Describe effective steps and methods to implement recurring groups.
- 3. Recognize creative modalities to use within wellness sessions.



*7B: Pediatric Oncology Social Work: Identifying Professional Practice Changes and Challenges During the Covid-19 Pandemic*

**Lori Wiener, PhD, DCSW**  
**Abigail Fry, BA**  
National Cancer Institute  
Bethesda, MD

**Nancy Cincotta, LCSW, MSW, MPhil**  
Psychosocial Consultant  
New York, NY

**Barbara Jones, PhD, MSW, FNAP**  
Steve Hicks School of Social Work, The University of Texas at Austin  
Dell Medical School  
Austin, TX

**Wendy Pelletier, MSW, RSW**  
Alberta Children’s Hospital  
Calgary, Canada

Pediatric oncology social workers have had to respond quickly to emergence of COVID-19 in their communities, hospitals and practices. Many have been furloughed or required to work remotely. Innovative and creative interventions have been needed in the face of required social distancing in order to meet the needs of pediatric oncology patients and their family members. This study is designed to learn from pediatric oncology social workers about major challenges, successful interventions and lessons learned.

Learning Objectives:

- 1. Describe the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on pediatric oncology social workers practice and communication modalities.
- 2. Define the ways that the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted psychosocial care at pediatric oncology settings and at the end of life care.
- 3. Understand the roles, responsibilities, and reflections of pediatric oncology social work during COVID-19 pandemic.
- 4. The survey will address the gap in knowledge of how the pediatric psychosocial oncology has been impacted by the pandemic and will help to inform future care models, and support needs relevant to the field of pediatric palliative care.

3:15 PM – 3:30 PM      **BREAK**

3:30 PM – 4:30 PM      **CLOSING SESSION (1 CE)**

*Advocacy Imperative and Strategies for Pediatric Oncology Social Workers*

**Lisl Schweers, LCSW, OSW-C**  
Children’s Hospital Los Angeles  
Los Angeles, CA

In order for clinical social workers to become more familiar with practices that can be defined as “advocacy,” this presentation will outline key concepts of social work advocacy in action - including ways to become involved in the political process and methods to effect social policy. Strategies for teaching self-advocacy skills to patients and their families as well as a review of current legislative issues that impact access to healthcare, the financial burden of treatment, and quality of life will also be covered in this presentation.

Learning Objectives:

- 1. Describe how critical theory and social empathy can serve as a foundation to bridge micro and macro social work practice.
- 2. Understand key advocacy priorities that are relevant to the childhood cancer community.
- 3. Learn how to teach self-advocacy skills to pediatric and AYA cancer survivors.

4:30 PM      **CLOSING REMARKS**

**Elyse Levin-Russman, LICSW, OSW-C**  
2020-2022 APOSW President  
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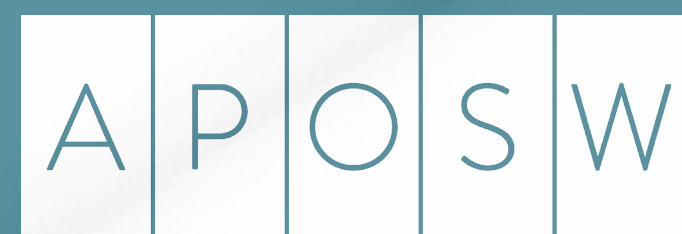






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LESSONS OF SUPPORT, COMMUNITY AND BEING  
ESSENTIAL IN PEDIATRIC ONCOLOGY SOCIAL WORK



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THANK YOU FOR BEING A PART OF  
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