



REGISTER NOW

SEEING THE FOREST THROUGH THE TREES:

**Increasing Knowledge,
Understanding, and Skills
in
Pediatric
Oncology & Hematology
Social Work**

**ATLANTA, GA
APRIL 7-9, 2025**

**48TH ANNUAL
CONFERENCE**



**ASSOCIATION OF PEDIATRIC
ONCOLOGY SOCIAL WORKERS**

CE INFORMATION

Attendees are responsible for reviewing whether their state accepts these CE contact hours.

APOSW is 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 **15** clinical CE contact hours for this activity.

his program is Approved by the National Association of Social Workers (Approval # 886400741-9153) for **15** continuing education contact hours.

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**.

Contact education.profdev@aposw.org with questions.

ACCESSIBILITY & INCLUSION

APOSW strives to host inclusive, accessible events that enable all individuals, including those with disabilities, to engage fully. To request an accommodation or for inquiries about accessibility, please contact conference@aposw.org.

APOSW believes that no person should be excluded from association programs, services, or volunteer participation on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, or for any other discriminatory reason.



48TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

A P O S W

CONFERENCE GOAL

To provide a collaborative learning opportunity for hematology and oncology social workers to address the needs of families impacted by childhood cancer and other blood disorders, while connecting with other professionals in their fields.

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 blood and cancer patients and their families through discussions of research studies, outcomes, and recommendations in the field of pediatric hematology/oncology social work.
- Identify and discuss the psychosocial needs of children diagnosed with blood diseases and cancer and their families toward compassionate end of life care, healing and future positive growth.
- Evaluate methods for professional development through leadership in the field of pediatric hematology/oncology and blood and marrow transplantation.

IMPORTANT DATES



EARLY REGISTRATION CLOSES **3/1/2025**



CANCELLATION DATE*

3/31/2025

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

REGISTRATION

REGISTER BY MARCH 1ST TO RECEIVE A \$100 EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT!!!

FULL REGISTRATION

FULL MEMBER	\$500
ASSOCIATE MEMBER	\$575
STUDENT MEMBER	\$280
STUDENT NON-MEMBER	\$330
RETIRED MEMBER	\$310
NON-MEMBER	\$700

ONE-DAY REGISTRATION

MEMBER	\$260
NON-MEMBER	\$325



DAY 1

Monday April 7th

7:30AM - 8:30AM

**REGISTRATION & BREAKFAST
SOLO SOCIAL WORKERS**

8:30AM - 8:45 AM

WELCOME

Rachel Rogovin, LICSW, APOSW President
Senior Director of Clinical Services, Team IMPACT

**8:45 AM - 9:45 AM
KEYNOTE (1.0 CE)**

Listening for Light: Facilitating Post-Traumatic Growth

Julie Larson, LCSW, Speaker-Educator, Psychotherapist

Social workers walk alongside cancer survivors and their families from diagnosis through survivorship and even end of life. They are uniquely positioned to acknowledge and respond to the mental and emotional impact of a cancer diagnosis. The observations we make during interactions at the bedside, in our private space or online not only help to fine tune coping skills and build qualities of resilience but have the potential to be the building blocks for facilitating post-traumatic growth. Post-traumatic growth represents a positive and meaningful psychological change experienced in some who suffer trauma. This workshop will take us beyond helping survivors cope with the day to day to learning to listen for the unique keys that unlock a transformative way our patients view themselves and their cancer experience.

10:00AM - 12:15 PM

SKILL BUILDING SESSION (2.0 CE)



Navigating Health Insurance to Avoid Financial Toxicity

Laura Beilke, JD, Triage Cancer

Oncology social workers can help address the unique legal and financial issues that caregivers face when caring for a child diagnosed with cancer. This skill-building workshop will provide attendees with an overview of health insurance, such as how to effectively use health insurance, how to appeal denials of coverage, understand consumer protections under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), and what to consider when a child turns 18 and is still in treatment.

48TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE





Social Sparks: Fueling Meaningful Connections Through Conversation

Michelle Fritsch, LCSW, *Texas Children's Hospital*

Nicole Ellis, LSW, *Penn Medicine Department of Radiation Oncology*

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

This presentation focuses on the importance of effective ice breakers, termed Social Sparks, in various contexts such as meetings, support groups, and camps, particularly for social workers engaging with oncology or hematology families. The session will explore a range of proven activities that energize and engage participants, emphasizing the need for leaders to understand their audience to select appropriate Social Sparks. Participants will learn practical methods for implementing these activities effectively, fostering enjoyable interactions and a sense of community. Key benefits highlighted include reduced anxiety, increased self-disclosure, improved active listening, and enhanced empathy. This skill-building workshop will feature an interactive segment encouraging audience participation in diverse Social Sparks, along with evaluation tools to help participants determine which activities to implement and how to assess their effectiveness post-implementation.



Identifying and Addressing Gaps in Care Among Menstruating Individuals

CC Cook, CSW, MPH, *Utah Center for Bleeding and Clotting Disorders at Primary Children's Hospital*

Although nearly 30% of people who menstruate report heavy menstrual bleeding, this population remains largely underrepresented and undertreated due to stigmatization of periods and lack of knowledge among primary care providers. This presentation will provide an overview of an ongoing study that aims to address this issue by empowering individuals with heavy menstrual bleeding and educating primary care providers about how to properly screen and treat heavy menstrual bleeding. During this engaging session, you will learn about the link between periods and bleeding disorders, how to advocate for your patients who report heavy menstrual bleeding, and maybe even learn something about yourself! This presentation will also include a segment about how social workers can get involved in their own research projects and help create change for their patients at the macro level.

12:15 PM - 1:45PM

LUNCH ON YOUR OWN

1:45 PM - 2:45 PM

BREAKOUT SESSION (1.0 CE)



Beyond Our Micro Practice: Identifying Systemic Racism, Barriers, and Biases in Pediatric Oncology Practice

Laura Moynihan, LICSW, OSW-C, *Hasbro Children's/Brown University Health*
Wade Iwata, LICSW, OSW-C, *Seattle Children's Hospital*

A fundamental element of medical social work practice involves addressing the social determinants of health. In a well-resourced area of medicine like pediatric oncology, however, the way to do this may not always be clear. In addition to our clinical interventions with patients and families, clinical social workers in pediatric oncology break down barriers to care, assess health literacy, serve as liaisons, and advocate. We must also, however, recognize and address systemic barriers and biases within the healthcare system and across other systems that impact the patients and families with whom we work, while empowering them to do the same. This presentation will explore how systemic racism, ableism, sexism, and other biases manifest in pediatric oncology, using case examples. The session will also address the role of social workers in responding to biases on both a micro and systemic level, with ethical considerations explored through a biomedical ethics framework.



Putting the Pieces Together : Navigating Peer Support Complexities

Jennifer Wall, MM, MSW student, *Zach's Bridge, Inc.*
Heather Held, BA, *Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation*
Anna Lundsford, MSW, *Dana Farber Cancer Institute*
Lori Weiner, PhD, DCSW, *National Cancer Institute, Center for Cancer Research National Institutes of Health*

Peer support can be a beacon to parents and caregivers, but finding the right offering and fit can be tough, or feel impossible. This panel crosses disciplines and settings to take a closer look at the "peer support puzzle" with the goal of helping attendees better understand different peer support types, considerations, and available resources to help those we serve access the best fit for peer support at the right time.



Supporting School Reintegration for Children with Cancer: The Role of Advocacy and Specialized Programs

Kitzia Benitez, MSW, *Children's Hospital Los Angeles*

School is vital for children during and after cancer treatment, providing normalcy, social connection, and mental stimulation. Programs like CHLA's STAR (School Transition and Reintegration) help children and families overcome challenges in returning to school by addressing trauma and connecting them with resources like IEPs and 504 plans. Led by a social worker, STAR fosters collaboration among families, schools, and treatment teams, emphasizing academic success, peer relationships, and emotional well-being. Unfortunately, such programs are not available everywhere, highlighting a critical need.

2:45 PM TO 3:00 PM

BREAK/VISIT EXHIBITS

3:00 PM TO 4:00 PM PANEL



How we can better meet the needs of patients and caregivers while supporting our newest social workers

Heather DeRousse, LCSW, *UT MD Anderson Cancer Center*

Michelle Fritsch, LCSW, *Texas Children's Hospital*

Meghan Wodill, LGSW, *Mayo Clinic*

This session will explore various issues that influence how social workers can better meet the needs of pediatric oncology patients and caregivers. Speakers will highlight ways to improve communication and collaboration between families and healthcare professionals, enhance social support, and boost family confidence, as well as discuss needs of the AYA population and how to help them navigate challenges and successfully achieve their long-term goals. Communication, confidence and support can also lead to better health outcomes and a more compassionate healthcare environment. However, we need to include social workers new to the field and how to help them in their careers. This involves fostering supportive work environments, interdisciplinary collaboration, ongoing professional development, while emphasizing self-care to prevent burnout and compassion fatigue, ensuring holistic care and patient advocacy. By combining family support and new worker support, this session is designed to provide insight into various clinical interventions, while providing opportunities for dialogue between presenters and conference attendees.

4:00PM TO 4:15PM BREAK/VISIT EXHIBITS

4:15 PM TO 5:15PM BREAKOUT SESSION (1.0 CE)



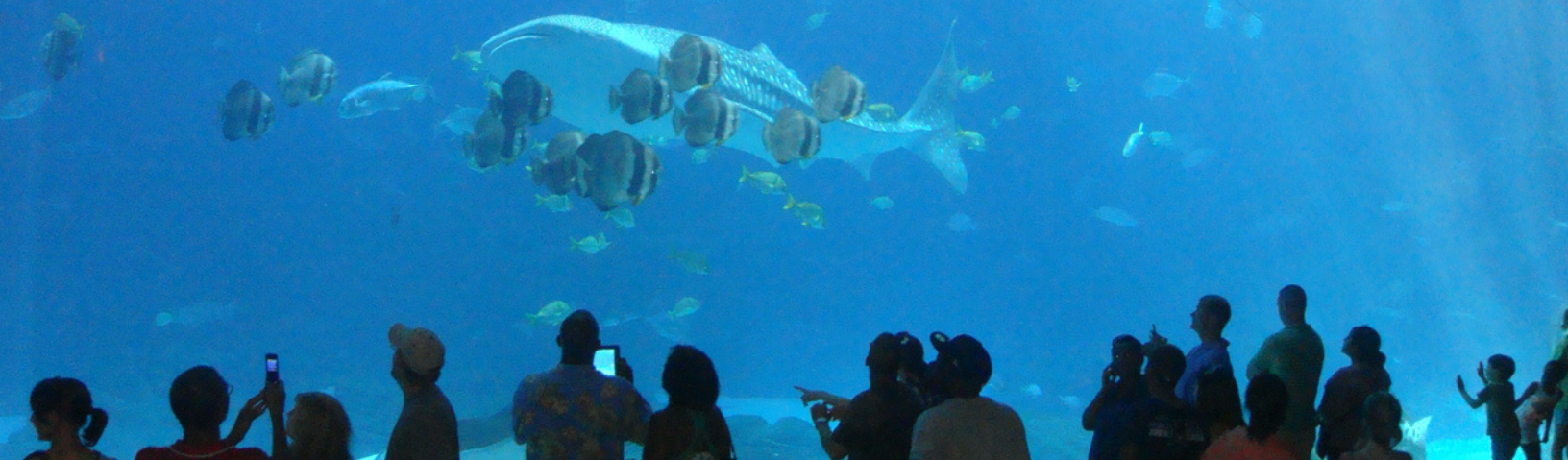
Optimizing the Social Work Team: A Collaborative Model for Enhanced Psychosocial Care and Therapeutic Support

Jemma Stratton, LCSW, *Inova Peterson Life with Cancer*

Victoria Burns, LCSW, *Inova Peterson Life with Cancer*

Inova Peterson Life with Cancer (LWC) is a community program providing education and therapeutic support at no cost to families affected by cancer. The Inova Health System's outpatient pediatric oncology clinic restructured the social work team, hiring two LWC LCSWs to deliver onsite therapeutic support and an MSW-level social worker to focus on resource allocation and case management needs. This change allows for oncology-trained social workers to rise to the top of their license, increasing job satisfaction and ability to meet the needs of patients and families and decreasing day-to-day task burden and risk of burnout.





Enhancing Pediatric Cancer Care through Universal Psychosocial Screening: The role of social work in collaborative program implementation

Susie Vargo, LCSW, *Children's Hospital of Philadelphia*

Learn about implementation of a universal psychosocial screening program intended to enhance clinical care and address health inequities in pediatric oncology. Oncology social workers are key to the success of screening through communication with patients and families and providing qualitative feedback to collaboratively improve the program and address pain points. Our data can be used to advocate for increased psychosocial services and a sharper focus on health equity in cancer centers.



Navigating Complex Treatment Decisions in HSCT: A Multidisciplinary Approach

Sydney Stupp, LCSW, OSW-C, *Children's Hospital Los Angeles*

Hailey Hassel, LICSW, *National Marrow Donor Program*

Ben Tweeten, LICSW, *National Marrow Donor Program*

This session will explore the complex decision-making process in hematopoietic stem cell transplantation (HSCT), highlighting the importance of a multidisciplinary approach to supporting patients and providers navigating complex decision-making and addressing treatment uncertainties.



OMG ... How Do You Work With Kids With Cancer? Pulling Back the Curtain After 30+ Years of Social Work Practice

Wendy Shama, MSW, RSW, *The Hospital for Sick Children*

Sonia Lucchetta, MSW, RSW, *The Hospital for Sick Children*

Many changes have transpired over our last 30 years of social work practice. Despite this, one constant remains: the strength and hope we encounter every day. The sadness and moral dilemmas are balanced by our personal resilience. Resilience is closely intertwined with vicarious trauma which we experience as we repeatedly witness distressing events, overwhelming our ability to cope and capacity to adapt. Vicarious trauma can lead to vicarious resilience which allows for moments of inspiration and opportunities for transformational growth. While vicarious trauma highlights that things can be terrible, vicarious resilience reminds us that there is hope. This presentation will draw on our professional experiences spanning the last 3 decades at the largest hospital in Canada. We will explore the concepts of resilience, vicarious trauma, and vicarious resilience, and reflect on the strategies we have implemented to successfully manage and mitigate the impact of this challenging work.

DAY 2

Tuesday, April 8th

7:30AM - 8:30AM

CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST & REGISTRATION

8:00AM - 9:00AM

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Special interest groups (SIGs) provide an opportunity for social workers to meet in smaller groups to discuss specific topics of interest

- **Community Based Programs**
- **Hematology**
- **Neuro-Oncology**
- **Survivorship**

9:00 AM - 9:15 AM

BREAK/VISIT EXHIBITS

9:15 AM - 10:15 AM

BREAKOUT SESSION (1.0 CES)



Helping Couples Facing Cancer with a Relationship Toolkit

Clay Culp, LCSW, St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital

Social workers experience firsthand the challenge couples experience as they face pediatric cancer together. Unfortunately, social workers and families also face a multitude of barriers to effectively addressing relationship health needs of pediatric cancer couples. To address this need, social workers in a pediatric oncology clinic collaborated with a chaplain, a child life specialist, and three parent advisers to create a Relationship Health Toolkit." Consisting of five brief sections, the Toolkit is designed to normalize relationship concerns, provide psychoeducation and anticipatory guidance, help parents reflect on both strengths and challenges within their own relationship, and encourage constructive communication through conversation prompts. This breakout session will equip how social workers at other institutions can use the Toolkit as part of their own practice. Along the way, attendees will learn key insights from existing research and insights from real caregivers.



» **Shaping Empowerment, Resiliency, and Mattering: Impact of an Adolescent and Young Adult Leadership Retreat**

Rachel Connor, LCSW, *CHOC Children's Hospital*

Michelle Greene, LCSW, *CHOC Children's Hospital*

This presentation will give an overview of our AYA program here at CHOC, with a specific focus on patient experiences and outcomes during our annual weekend retreat. Leveraging narrative therapy and peer support within a weekend retreat showed a trend to increased sense of mattering and statistically significant changes in empowerment and resiliency scores. Qualitative feedback correlated with this data, reflecting an increased sense of connection. Combining narrative storytelling with relationship building and education within an AYA leadership retreat is a powerful tool for AYA programming. We hope to show how this type of programming can be used within other hospitals and programs to improve patient's mental health and survivorship outcomes.

» **Fostering Connections: How Peer Mentoring Cultivates Community Support**

Jenn Kelley, CCLS, *Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation*

Kelsey Pease, LCSW, *Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago*

This presentation discusses a peer mentoring program developed through collaboration between a non-profit and a hospital-based social worker. It connects parents, caregivers, and siblings with trained mentors, providing support to alleviate isolation and foster resilience. We will delve into the benefits of mentorship while highlighting the vital collaboration between social workers and nonprofits, all aimed at enhancing the quality of care for families. Together, we can create a stronger support network, significantly improving outcomes for families.

10:15 AM - 10:30 AM BREAK/VISIT EXHIBITS

10:30 AM - 11:30 AM KEYNOTE 2 (1.0 CE)

Persevering Beyond the Moral Distress

Naadira Upshaw, PsyD, ABPP, *Senior Pediatric Psychologist, Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center*

The state of the world and its impact on our patients and families also significantly impacts our well-being as clinicians and providers - and yet we are somehow persevering. Join us as we aim to move beyond talking about the problem, and diving into how we persist beyond the moral distress that can compound our work everyday!



11:30 AM - 11:45 AM BUSINESS MEETING

12:00 PM - 1:30 PM CELEBRATION LUNCH

Network, learn about the business of APOSW and celebrate the Social Workers of the Year!

1:45PM - 4:00 PM SKILL BUILDING (2.0 CES)

Who is Holding the Clinical Toolbox?: Enhancing Patient-Centered Care Through Intentional Use of Self in Pediatric Oncology

Laura Moynihan, LICSW, OSW-C, *Hasbro Children's Hospital*
Larissa Hewitt, LICSW, *Dana Farber Cancer Institute*

Clinical social workers play a vital role in providing psychosocial support to pediatric oncology patients and families from diagnosis through survivorship and end of life care. This presentation examines the concept of "use of self" in pediatric oncology while emphasizing self-awareness, authenticity, and empathy as key tools for building (and maintaining) therapeutic relationships. Using case examples, the presentation will highlight both effective and ineffective uses of self, focusing on the balance between engagement and maintaining boundaries. Aimed at experienced social workers, it will also address incorporating and explaining use of self when training new clinicians and students, promoting reflection on practice, ethical concerns, and strategies to enhance effectiveness and resilience.

Caregiver Rights & Resources

Laura Beilke, JD, *Triage Cancer*

Oncology social workers can help address the unique legal and financial issues that caregivers face when caring for a child diagnosed with cancer. This skill-building workshop will provide attendees with an overview of caregiver rights, such as what employment rights caregivers have, an overview of state paid and unpaid family and medical leave laws, how to maintain income while taking time off work, and what to consider when a child turns 18 and is still in treatment.

Helping Children Cope with Medical Illness

Heather Jolly, LCSW, ACHP-SW, *Kaiser Permanente Oakland and Bay Health*

Working with children with life-threatening illness and their siblings brings a range of opportunities for helping children cope; explore their fears, hopes, strengths and challenges; and make meaning of their experience. This presentation will explore a range of interventions social workers can use to help identify how children are coping, what support they are needing, and how to meet them, wherever they are in any given moment. Modalities presented will include art, music, bibliotherapy and play.

4:00 PM – 4:15 PM

BREAK/VISIT EXHIBITS

4:15 PM – 5:15 PM

BREAKOUT SESSION (1.0 CES)



SickKids Caregiver Day Program

Fiona Penny, MSW, *Hospital for Sick Children*

Benita Yi, MSW, *Hospital for Sick Children*

Based on the current literature and landscape of support and interventions for caregivers of oncology patients, The Hospital for Sick Children's Garron Family Psychosocial Team developed and implemented an in-person Caregiver Day program in November 2024. In this breakout workshop, the Social Work team will walk through the Caregiver Day program development process, outcomes, and lessons learned and offer an interactive discussion on future program possibilities for paediatric oncology caregivers.



Enhancing Communication Skills in Pediatric Oncology: Practical Application of Motivational Interviewing (MI) for Supporting Parents After Their Child Receives a Terminal Cancer Diagnosis

Jennifer Wall, MM, MSW Student, *Zach's Bridge, Inc.*

Katie Jenkins, LSW, *Cancer Hope Network*

Attendees will leave with practical skills and a deeper understanding of how MI can be applied to strengthen their interactions with parents, helping them move toward acceptance and empowering them to make informed decisions about their child's care. This session will be especially beneficial for those seeking to enhance their communication strategies and improve their ability to support families through the most challenging times of their lives. Attendees will gain tools to navigate sensitive topics such as autopsy and tissue donation, balancing quantity versus quality of life, and aligning with family values. Through practical applications of Motivational Interviewing, participants will strengthen their skills to offer compassionate guidance and meaningful support to parents facing difficult decisions.



CAC2 Survivorship Toolkit: A collaborative effort to support the diverse needs of childhood cancer survivors and their families through comprehensive education and resources

Mariah Forster Olson, MBA, *Coalition Against Childhood Cancer (CAC2)*

In 2020, the U.S. had around 500,000 childhood cancer survivors, and that number increases annually. Many survivors experience late effects from the brutal, toxic treatments necessary to save their lives, which can significantly impact their physical and mental health. Over 95% of survivors face significant health issues by age 45. Yet, resources and support are lacking and insufficient. The Coalition Against Childhood Cancer (CAC2) works to improve collaboration and information sharing in advocacy, family support, research, and survivorship. To aid survivors and their families, the CAC2 Survivorship Interest Group created the CAC2 Survivorship Toolkit, which addresses a broad spectrum of topics influencing quality of life, such as physical and psychological health, social relationships, and independence. By providing comprehensive, meaningful resources, the toolkit aims to empower survivors and their families with valuable resources to alleviate some of their isolation and burdens.

DAY 3

Wednesday, April 9th

7:30 AM - 8:30AM

CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

8:00AM - 9:00AM

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Special interest groups (SIGs) provide an opportunity for social workers to meet in smaller groups to discuss specific topics of interest

- **Advocacy**
- **AYA**
- **EOL/Palliative Care**
- **Leadership**
- **Research**

9:00 AM - 11:15 AM

SKILL BUILDING (2.0 CES)



The Power of Group Work in Pediatric Oncology Social Work Practice

Nancy Cincotta, LCSW, *Richi Childhood Cancer Foundation*

The opportunity to identify, create, and sustain group work practice can be among the most useful approaches to help family members become empowered, educated, and supported in the childhood cancer journey. Some topics will include: how social workers see their role in groupwork, anxiety in group work leadership, small and large group process, differential use of groups (stage of development and illness, (including end of life and bereavement), duration of programming, age-based programs, activity-based exercises, recreational programming, psychoeducation, mindfulness, improvisation, narrative medicine, and creative arts-based programs. Issues such as presence, allowing the unfolding of the process, awareness of illness transactions, dealing with the elephant(s) in the room, and silence will also be explored. Literature relevant to oncology social work group practice and research will be reviewed, Group participants' voices and evaluative responses will be integrated throughout.



Ethical Challenges and Clinical Considerations when addressing Financial Toxicities with Pediatric Oncology Families

Elyse Levin-Russman, LICSW, OSW-C, *Massachusetts General for Children*

Jess Nambudiri, LSW, *Children's Hospital of Philadelphia*

The financial toxicities of pediatric cancer is well understood by Social Work clinicians. Assessing for financial burdens and allocating limited resources is often central to the scope of practice for Social Workers in Pediatric Oncology. It requires clinically astute skills and consideration of the ethical challenges in deciding how financial resources are distributed fairly and equitably. This session will share a tool for assessment and explore the dilemmas clinician encounter through presentation and case reviews. There will be the opportunity for shared reflection and problem solving in small group discussions.



Culture in Pediatric Social Work: Building Awareness and Skills for Cultural Humility and Radical Empathy

Ellie Vincent, LMSW, MD *Anderson Children's Cancer Center*

Elizabeth Lopez, LMSW, MD *Anderson Children's Cancer Center*

Charmaine Quieroga, LMSW, MD *Anderson Children's Cancer Center*

This skill-building workshop aims to understand cultural realms that are present in pediatric oncology and broader healthcare systems; empower social workers to lead initiatives as it relates to cultural humility in patient care and relationships with colleagues; and gain skills to acknowledge personal biases and meanings of culture as an active and ongoing construct. Interactive materials will promote dialogue around cultural humility and radical empathy. Self-reflection and case studies will also be utilized to engage learners.

10:00 AM - 10:15 AM BREAK/VISIT EXHIBITS

10:15 AM - 11:15 AM BREAKOUT SESSION (1.0 CE)



Precision Medicine for Social Workers: How the Madelyn James Foundation uses their lived experience as a radical case study in providing direct, unconditional support.

Jacquelyn Didio, Executive Director, *Madelyn James Foundation*

After 17 years in nonprofit work, I faced a personal tragedy that reshaped my life. When my daughter Maddy was diagnosed with aggressive leukemia, we experienced the privilege of accessing top medical care and support. Despite this, Maddy's battle ended with her passing, leaving us heartbroken but determined to do more. Inspired by our journey, we founded an organization focused on increasing equity for low-income families facing childhood cancer. Partnering with social workers at children's hospitals and focused on research from experts like Dr. Kira Bona, we address critical gaps in support, easing financial and logistical burdens so families can focus on their child's treatment. Madelyn James Pediatric Cancer Foundation is a radical, real life case study for prioritizing deep, high-impact support for the highest need families rather than spreading resources thin across many. We build close connections and make deep financial investments to address each family's unique challenges.



Postmortem Tissue Donation: Giving Families the Ability to Choose

Heather Held, BA, *Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation*

Alison Bloom, LSW, *ChadTough Defeat DIPG Foundation*

Ginny McLean, Program Director, *Swiftly Foundation/Gift from a Child*

This session addresses the sensitive topic of post-mortem brain tissue donation, emphasizing its vital role in advancing pediatric brain tumor research and improving treatment outcomes. Families who donate their child's tissue make a profound contribution to science. However, some pediatric hospitals lack the resources to guide families through this decision confidently.

The Gift from a Child (GFAC) initiative, founded by the Swiftly Foundation, supports families nationwide in making tissue donations, creating infrastructure that facilitates groundbreaking research. This workshop aims to empower social workers and healthcare professionals to partner with neuro-oncologists in navigating these challenging conversations. It also highlights GFAC's impact on research and shares insights from partner nonprofits about family experiences, equipping attendees to provide compassionate and informed support during one of the most difficult times for families.



Starfish: The Role of the Pediatric Oncology Social Worker in School Sessions

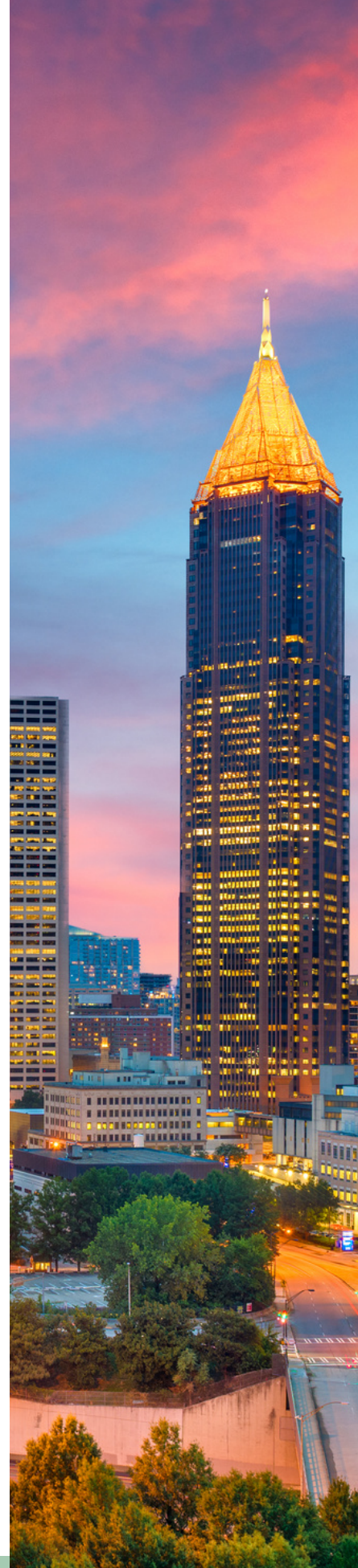
Leah Forster Gauvin LCSW, OSW-C, APOSW

Difficulties with school re-entry for pediatric cancer patients are well-described in the literature. Pediatric oncology social workers are uniquely suited to address this issue through school sessions. These sessions provide valuable cancer-related information, and strongly focus on building empathy and practical helping strategies in the classroom. Peers are then better able to support the patient and the patient's emotional distress and discomfort are reduced upon their return to school. In this presentation, you will learn how to design a comprehensive school session aimed at ameliorating school re-entry problems and bolstering positivity and kindness in the classroom. This prevention strategy is an important tool in our toolbox and one that provides great value to the child with cancer, their peers, school personnel, as well as the pediatric oncology social worker.

11:15 AM - 11:30 AM

BREAK/VISIT EXHIBITS

48TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE



A P O S W

11:30 AM - 12:30 PM
INTENSIVE 3 (1.0 CE)

APPLYING PALLIATIVE CARE COMMUNICATION & ETHICAL PRINCIPLES TO PEDIATRIC HEMATOLOGY/ ONCOLOGY SOCIAL WORK

Katharine E. Brock, MD, MS,
Children's Healthcare of Atlanta
Aflac Cancer & Blood Disorders Center

Using case-based examples, we will explore the core principles of palliative care communication and ethics and discuss how these can be applied in the everyday and difficult situations that occur in pediatric cancer care. This will include how to utilize palliative care communication skills during solo and coordinated patient care encounters, as well as decision making, and supporting family values.

12:30 PM - 12:45 PM

CLOSING REMARKS

Rachel Rogovin, LICSW, APOSW President
Senior Director of Clinical Services, Team IMPACT

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING!
PLEASE CHECK YOUR EMAIL REGARDING THE CONFERENCE EVALUATION.

