

**Lisa Marry**

**Assistant Director of Nursing**

**National Cancer Control Programme**

**“20 Years, 20 Stories.”      #20YearsUKONS**

***1. How did you first get involved with UKONS, and what drew you to it?***

I first became involved with UKONS in 2019, when I began working at the National Cancer Control Programme. My manager and mentor, Terry Hanan National Clinical Lead for Cancer Nursing in Ireland, had been working with Dr Verna Lavender and Dr Catherine Oakley to introduce and implement the UKONS SACT Competency Passport into Ireland. Historically in Ireland, hospitals involved in the administration of SACT to cancer patients have developed their own training programme at a local level. Thus, education and training for SACT administration has differed greatly, possibly leading to inconsistencies and valuable time and resources spent retraining nurses who may have moved to another hospital. I took over the project from Terry and began work to develop the NCCP National SACT Competency Programme for Nurses Working in Cancer Care, which launched in 2022 and has transformed the way cancer nurses are trained to administer SACT in Ireland. It ensures that SACT training is evidence based and up-to-date. It standardises knowledge, competency and best practice, as well as providing specialisation in cancer care nursing, enhancing professional confidence and job satisfaction. In May 2024, we launched the UKONS Digital SACT Competency passport, so nurses can now complete their passport via Compassly. I worked with Dr Karen Campbell, and Jonathan Knight of Compassly to introduce this.

***2. How has UKONS influenced your career?***

UKONS has had an outstanding positive impact on my career. Through sharing and collaboration, UKONS have contributed to the establishment, development and expansion of many cancer nursing initiatives in Ireland, positively impacting on patient care and access to services. In May this year, I was named winner of the Irish Health Care Centre Awards, Healthcare Initiative Nursing Project of the Year for the NCCP National SACT Competency Programme for Nurses Working in Cancer Care. This project would not have been possible without UKONS.

***3. In what ways has UKONS influenced or supported your cancer nursing career?***

Myself and my NCCP colleagues attend the UKONS Conference annually. I feel that above all other conferences, the UKONS conference is the most beneficial in terms of direct cancer nursing care. The patient is always our primary focus, and I bring back lots of project ideas after every conference, whether influenced by the speakers, posters or simply having conversations with other cancer nurses. These ideas have led to the initiation of nursing projects, which we roll out nationally through the NCCP, ultimately ensuring that cancer patients in Ireland, and their families, benefit from high-quality, up-to-date and research-based nursing care from our nursing teams.