

ACS NNRT 2026–2029 Strategic Roadmap Priority Teams Updates

The ACS National Navigation Roundtable (ACS NNRT) is entering an exciting new phase of work guided by the [2026-2029 Strategic Roadmap](#). The roadmap identifies key priority areas that will advance patient navigation through implementation and sustainability, health equity, policy and funding solutions, and the strategic integration of technology and innovation.

As part of this evolution, ACS NNRT is transitioning from standing Task Groups to **Priority Teams**. This new structure will allow members to collaborate around the roadmap's strategic priorities, generate innovative ideas, identify emerging opportunities and challenges, and help shape the future direction of the Roundtable. The Priority Teams will play a central role in informing annual workplans and advancing initiatives that support high-quality, equitable navigation across the continuum of cancer care.

What Are Priority Teams?

Priority Teams are member-driven groups that:

- Are built upon the strong foundation and successful track record of the ACS NNRT Task Groups and are aligned directly with the Three-Year Strategic Roadmap.
- Are led by member Co-Chairs who have been appointed by the Steering Committee leadership.
- Align directly with the priorities outlined in the ACS NNRT Strategic Roadmap.
- Provide a forum for members to share ideas, network, and collaborate.
- Assess goals, outcomes, opportunities, and challenges related to their priority area.
- Generate recommendations and project ideas to inform the Roundtable's annual workplan.
- Facilitate discussion on emerging topics and trends impacting patient navigation.
- Collaborate with ACS NNRT staff and volunteer leaders to advance strategic initiatives.
- Plan specific content for ACS NNRT annual convening events (virtual and in-person).

With the new Roadmap and these Priority Teams, the term **Task Groups** now means a smaller, action-oriented group within the Priority Team that will convene to complete specific projects or deliverables within a defined timeframe. Also, these new Priority Teams may recommend the creation of future Task Groups when focused expertise is needed.

Benefits of Participating

Participation in a Priority Team provides opportunities to:

- Build relationships with current and future ACS NNRT leaders.
- Engage with experts and peers across the navigation field.
- Contribute to meaningful projects and initiatives.
- Explore emerging topics, barriers, and opportunities.
- Develop resources, publications, educational offerings, and convenings.
- Expand professional networks and collaborative partnerships.

2026 ACS NNRT Priority Teams

1. Sustainability & Implementation

Co-Chairs: Tracy Battaglia, MD, MPH & Julie McMahon, MPH

Launch Date: September 11, 2026, 11:00am- 12pm ET

Meeting Cadence: The 2nd Friday of each month at 11:00am-12pm ET

Purpose: This Priority Team focuses on advancing the implementation, evaluation, and sustainability of patient navigation programs. Members will explore best practices, implementation barriers and solutions, quality improvement initiatives in navigation, and evidence generation to drive real-world impact and strengthen navigation programs.

Skills & Expertise Needed

- Implementation science
- Program implementation and operations
- Reimbursement and sustainability strategies
- Health IT and technology systems
- Documentation and workflow design
- Research and evaluation
- Healthcare administration
- Scientific and professional writing
- Program assessment
- Landscape analysis
- Data collection and reporting
- Quality improvement
- Outcomes measurement
- Patient Safety and Regulatory Compliance

2. Elevating Navigation to Drive Equity

Co-Chairs: Arti Varanasi, PhD, MPH & Tracie Lewis, MS

Launch Date: September 17, 2026, 1:30-2:30pm ET

Meeting Cadence: The 3rd Thursday of every 1 month at 1:30-230pm ET

Purpose: This Priority Team focuses on strengthening navigation as a driver of health equity. Members will identify strategies that elevate the navigation workforce, reduce disparities, improve access to care, amplify diverse perspectives, and promote equitable outcomes across the cancer continuum.

Skills & Expertise Needed

- Health equity and disparity reduction
- Professional advocacy
- Health economics
- Data analysis
- Community engagement
- Patient navigation leadership
- Community health worker integration
- Cultural humility and inclusive practices
- Population health
- Social determinants of health expertise
- Patient and caregiver engagement

3. Strategic Alliances & Member Engagement

Status: Paused

This priority area remains part of the Strategic Roadmap and will be activated later in the year as leadership and our priority teams determine organizational needs.

4. Policy Solutions & Funding Stability

Co-Chairs: Katie Garfield, JD & Gladys Arias, MPA

Launch Date: Friday, September 18, 2026 at 11am-12pm ET

Meeting Cadence: 3rd Friday of each month at 11am-12pm ET

Purpose: This Priority Team focuses on identifying policy, reimbursement, and funding solutions that support the long-term sustainability of navigation services. Members will explore opportunities to strengthen, protect, and expand reimbursement, coverage and funding stability for navigation. Also provide guidance for the field including health-system executives, payers, and policymakers with evidence-based tools and information.

Skills & Expertise Needed

- Federal, state, or local health policy expertise
- Healthcare reimbursement and payment models
- Value-based care strategies
- Medicare and Medicaid policy knowledge
- Cancer care financing
- Health economics
- Legislative and regulatory affairs
- Advocacy and coalition building
- Grant funding and sustainability planning
- Business case development
- Research and policy analysis
- Employer and payer engagement
- Outcomes and ROI measurement
- Strategic partnerships

5. Technology & Innovation

Co-Chairs: Jennifer Bires, LCSW, OSW-C & Bonny Morris, PhD, MSPH, RN

Launch Date: Tuesday, October 6, 1-2pm ET

Meeting Cadence: 1st Tuesday of each month 1-2pm ET

Purpose: This Priority Team explores the strategic and ethical integration of technology, digital health solutions, artificial intelligence, and innovation into patient navigation. Members will help identify opportunities, best practices, risks, and safeguards that enhance navigator interactions and patient outcomes while maintaining trust and equity.

Skills & Expertise Needed

- Healthcare technology expertise
- Health information technology (IT)
- Artificial intelligence and digital health
- Ethics and governance
- Patient experience and engagement
- Data privacy and security
- Clinical workflow integration
- Innovation strategy
- Human-centered design
- Digital equity
- Outcome measurement
- Advocacy organization representation
- Technology implementation and evaluation

