



Strategic Roadmap 2026–2029



About ACS NNRT

The American Cancer Society National Navigation Roundtable (ACS NNRT) was established in 2017 and serves as a catalyst to advance and sustain patient navigation throughout the oncology care continuum. Now a national coalition of more than 160 member organizations, we are uniquely positioned to influence and support a shared vision. Our members represent diverse sectors including academic and community cancer centers, education, public health, nonprofit advocacy organizations, survivor groups, professional societies, industry, and state and federal agencies.

The ACS NNRT is guided by an Executive Leadership Team as well as a Steering Committee composed of a diverse group of professionals dedicated to navigation sustainability. As the backbone organization, ACS promotes the sustainability and longevity of the ACS NNRT by providing organizational leadership and expert staff support.

Vision

ACS NNRT is committed to high quality cancer care for all through evidence-based navigation.

Mission

The ACS NNRT is a collaboration that advances patient navigation efforts to eliminate barriers for quality care, reduce disparities in health outcomes, and foster ongoing health equity across the cancer continuum.

ACS Health Equity Statement

To the ACS and its nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy affiliate, the ACS Cancer Action Network (ACS CANSM), health equity means everyone has a fair and just opportunity to prevent, detect, treat, and survive cancer. Achieving this requires eliminating barriers and addressing specific needs to ensure equal opportunity for health and cancer-free living.

We believe all people deserve the chance to live longer, healthier lives free from cancer—regardless of income, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability status, or geography.

Patient Navigation

Patient navigation is the individualized assistance provided to patients, families, and caregivers to overcome health care system barriers and ensure timely access to quality medical and psychosocial care.¹ Navigation has demonstrated success in advancing health equity by addressing the needs of historically marginalized populations and those in under-resourced communities. One of the only evidence-based interventions demonstrated to address disparities in cancer care is patient navigation. Patient navigation is a health care service delivery model that aims to overcome individual barriers to accessing timely and quality cancer care.² To this end, a goal of the ACS NNRT is to convene and support the field of navigation in addressing equity. The ACS NNRT brings organizations together to scale and strengthen evidence-based oncology patient navigation so that patients—especially those facing systemic, financial, geographic, or social barriers—can access timely, high-quality cancer care from prevention through survivorship

1. Franklin E, Burke S, Dean M, Johnston D, Nevidjon B, Booth LS. Oncology Navigation Standards of Professional Practice. *Clin J Oncol Nurs*. 2022;26(3):E14-E25. doi:10.1188/22.CJON.E14-E25[KC1] [CL2] [KC3] [KC4]

2. Dwyer AJ, Wender RC, Staples ES, Dean MS, Sharpe K, Fleisher L, Burhansstipanov L, Johnson W, Martinez L, Wiatrek DE, Calhoun E, Battaglia TA; the National Navigation Roundtable. Collective pursuit for equity in cancer care: The National Navigation Roundtable. *Cancer*. 2022. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cncr.34162>

Acknowledgments

We extend our deepest gratitude to the ACS NNRT volunteer leaders, national experts, and staff whose expertise, passion, and steady leadership made the development of this Strategic Roadmap possible. Each of you played a vital role in shaping a plan that elevates our mission, strengthens our partnerships, and centers equity in all we do. Thank you for your hard work, thoughtful leadership, and unwavering commitment to advancing navigation sustainability. This roadmap reflects your collective contributions and will guide and strengthen our work for years to come.

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The Work of the Roundtable

The ACS NNRT develops national strategies, produces tools and resources, and convenes partners to further our overarching mission of sustaining oncology patient navigation. Leveraging the experience and expertise of its members, the roundtable fills critical gaps that no single organization can address alone. The roundtable is committed to creating an environment for members to network, collaborate, and innovate on new and impactful interventions to ensure a greater impact overall.

Roundtable Functions



Convening Partners

Facilitate member dialogue, convene national membership meetings, host cross-sector summits, and engage with other ACS Roundtables.



Developing National Strategies

Align goals across priority teams and establish national guidance on reimbursement, the use of digital tools, as well as best practices for implementation.



Building Evidence

Conduct barrier analyses, perform landscape assessments, and publish case studies.



Professional Education

Amplify Oncology Navigation Standards of Professional Practice, conduct navigation sustainability learning collaboratives, develop webinars, and create educational tools.



System, Practice, & Policy Change

Gather cross-sector experts to build stable funding practices for steady growth.

Strategic Roadmap

Background

For nearly a decade, members and partners of the ACS NNRT have united around a shared commitment to advancing equitable access to high-quality navigation services across the cancer care continuum. Building on this foundation and in response to the evolving cancer landscape, the ACS NNRT has expanded its focus to further strengthen the role of patient navigation in increasing access to cancer and psychosocial care, improving patient outcomes, and reducing health disparities.

To guide this next phase of work, the ACS NNRT identified key priority areas designed to advance navigation by accelerating real-world implementation and sustainability of patient navigation, strengthening navigation as a core driver of equitable cancer care, enhancing strategic collaboration and member engagement, advancing sustainable funding and policy solutions, and strategically and ethically integrating digital tools and artificial intelligence (AI) to drive measurable impact.

In 2025, the ACS NNRT Steering Committee engaged in a structured evaluation and planning process that culminated at the ACS NNRT National Meeting in September, where the full membership had the opportunity to provide feedback and help shape the direction of the Three-Year Roadmap (2026-2029).

Timeline

The **ACS NNRT Steering Committee** and select **Task Group Co-Chairs** (transitioning to Priority Teams) began the strategic planning for the Three-Year Roadmap in May 2025.



Strategic Roadmap Development Overview

The Strategic Roadmap was created through a highly participatory process involving ACS NNRT leadership, volunteers, and team members. Our approach was grounded in a set of guiding design principles and built on a structured five step methodology.

Design Principles

Throughout this process, we committed to:

- **Building on what already works**, honoring the strengths and successes of our prior and existing initiatives.
- **Responding to member needs**, ensuring the roadmap reflects the priorities and insights of our diverse partners.
- **Aligning with the ACS's mission** to ensure everyone has an opportunity to prevent, detect, treat, and survive cancer.
- **Maintaining strategic focus while enabling flexibility**, allowing us to stay aligned with long-term goals and still adapt to emerging opportunities and challenges.

These principles informed each step and ensured that the roadmap remained both grounded in evidence and adaptable to real-world contexts.

Our Five Step Strategy Development Process

Drawing on best practices in strategic planning, we utilized a fivestep process to shape the Strategic Roadmap:

1. **Retrospective Review:** Looking back at the roundtable's history for what has worked and other lessons learned.
2. **Contextual Analysis:** What current scientific developments need to be reflected and what are our member needs/wants?
3. **Strategic Direction:** What does the roundtable want to complete in the next 3 years?
4. **Strategic Interventions & Measures:** What helps us achieve that strategic direction and how will we remain accountable to our impact?
5. **Review & Revise:** Seek member input and adapt plan as new discoveries or challenges emerge.

ACS NNRT Three-Year Goal

As a coalition of member organizations, the ACS NNRT will lead the advancement of sustainable, high-quality patient navigation—driving equitable access to cancer care, strengthening standards and partnerships, expanding supportive policy and reimbursement, and integrating innovation in ways that enhance human-centered care across the cancer continuum.

Priority Areas

1

SUSTAINABLE NAVIGATION

Advance sustainable navigation to overcome barriers to implementation and health equity.

2

DRIVING EQUITABLE CANCER CARE

Elevate navigation as a core driver of equitable, high-quality cancer care. Create evidence-based guidance to elevate navigation and demonstrate increased adoption of tools and standards of practice.

3

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Strengthen navigation quality, access, and sustainability by improving membership diversity, expanding strategic partnerships, and knowledge-sharing and cross-task collaboration.

4

FUNDING & POLICY

Protect, sustain and expand reimbursement, coverage, and funding stability for navigation.

5

ETHICAL INTEGRATION OF TECHNOLOGY

Provide recommendations on how to integrate digital technologies into navigation services in a way that supports and enhances human interaction, promotes equitable access, digital literacy and ethical adoption.


Priority 1



Sustainable Navigation in Action – Overcoming Barriers to Implementation



Outcomes: by 2029 we'll have achieved

- **Reduced barriers:** Implementation barriers to evidence-based navigation are identified, prioritized, and measurably reduced across member organizations.
- **Replicable models:** Exemplary navigation programs are recognized and used as practical models for implementation of navigation programs in every setting.
- **Increased capacity:** More sites successfully implement sustainable navigation infrastructure and reimbursement practices.

Activities: how we'll achieve our outcomes

 **Conduct Barrier Analyses:** Research high-impact challenges in navigation reimbursement, standards implementation, and sustainability practices to guide resource development.


 **Develop Implementation Tools:** Create practical resources to address the top three identified barriers to sustainable navigation.


 **Disseminate Results and Showcase Promising Practices:** Dissemination strategies may include professional education webinars, publications, and conferences that feature successful implementation of PIN codes, practice standards and sustainability frameworks in national or state forums and updated guides.

Measures: how we'll know we achieved our outcomes

- Reach: Resource analytics (website and social media users, views, sessions, impressions, engagement)
- Knowledge & Capacity: Implement navigation strategies to reduce barriers (webinar/meeting survey)
- Implementation: Use of recommended navigation strategies (member surveys, testimonials)
- Outputs: # and types of resources developed, updated, and shared; # and types of events held

Roundtable Functions



Convening
Partners



Developing
National Strategies



Building
Evidence



Professional
Education



System, Practice,
& Policy Changes




Priority 2

Strengthening and Elevating Navigation as a Core Driver of Equitable Cancer Care

Outcomes: by 2029 we'll have achieved

- **Systemic Recognition:** Navigation is recognized by health systems and policymakers as a core clinical and equity function embedded in care.
- **Standardized Alignment:** Widespread adoption of Oncology Navigation Standards of Professional Practice to promote definitions, roles and role-specific competencies within navigation and align practice expectations across clinical and community settings.
- **Cross-Sector Integration:** Strengthened partnerships between Roundtables and equity partners to advance sustainable navigation.

Activities: how we'll achieve our outcomes

-  **Amplify Professional Standards:** Promote Oncology Navigation Standards of Professional Practice through educational sessions and tools to define core navigation functions nationwide.
-  **Foster Roundtable Collaboration:** Develop joint programming and tools for membership and cross-sector collaboration with NNRT and other ACS Roundtables to increase knowledge of navigation as an equity driver.
-  **Generate Impact Evidence:** Produce publications demonstrating the measurable clinical and equity impacts of navigation through collaborative research.

Measures: how we'll know we achieved our outcomes

- Reach: Webinar attendance and resource analytics (website and social media users, views, sessions)
- Satisfaction: Participant feedback from webinar and meeting surveys
- Knowledge & Capacity: Self-reported knowledge and readiness to implement navigation standards (surveys)
- Adoption: Use of navigation standards (member surveys, intention to apply, testimonials)
- Outputs: # and types of resources developed, updated, and shared; # and types of events held

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Priority 3



Strategic Alliances and Member Engagement



Outcomes: by 2029 we'll have achieved

- **Collective Impact:** Increased member engagement and cross-sector collaboration across navigation-focused organizations.
- **Unified Voice:** Strategically aligned partnerships that expand the Roundtable's influence across oncology and non-traditional sectors.
- **Coordinated Strategy:** Goals and timelines are aligned across priority teams to reduce duplication and enhance collective action.

Activities: how we'll achieve our outcomes

 **Improve Member Onboarding:** Create orientation modules and primers to educate new members on the NNRT strategic priorities.


 **Expand Strategic Partnerships:** Establish formal collaborations with entities such as payers, revenue cycle professionals, health IT companies, CBOs, and licensing bodies to advance knowledge exchange and sustainability.


 **Facilitate Peer Learning:** Host workforce experts and educational sessions to improve knowledge in focal areas (e.g., health policy, philanthropy, population health and health innovation) and spark peer-sharing and cross-sector collaboration to center the work on sustaining oncology patient navigation.

Measures: how we'll know we achieved our outcomes

- Engagement: Member participation (attendance, contributions) and partner coordination (payers, CBOs, licensing bodies)
- Reach: Attendance at webinars and peer learning sessions
- Satisfaction: Participant feedback from webinar and meeting surveys
- Outputs: # and types of resources developed, updated, and shared; # and types of events held

Roundtable Functions



Convening Partners



Developing National Strategies



Building Evidence



Professional Education



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Priority 4


Advance Sustainable Funding and Policy Solutions


Outcomes: by 2029 we'll have achieved

- **Protected Reimbursement:** Existing reimbursement pathways, including PIN, are protected, strengthened, and consistently implemented.
- **Expanded Coverage:** New funding and coverage pathways for navigation in both clinical and community settings are identified and advanced.
- **Informed Decision-Making:** Health system executives, payers and policymakers have evidence-based guidance on the value, ROI, and impact of navigation.

Activities: how we'll achieve our outcomes

 **Leverage Reimbursement Data:** Analyze PIN survey data to describe the current landscape and make specific recommendations via webinars and publications to increase adoption of PIN (and other) codes and coverages.

 **Partner for Advocacy:** Collaborate with ACS CAN to update advocacy toolkits and support legislative efforts to fund navigation services.

 **Convene Funding Experts:** Host a cross-sector summit involving payers, revenue cycle experts, healthcare leaders and providers to educate members and partners about value/ROI, current reimbursement practices and coverages and how to achieve funding stability of navigation programs.

Measures: how we'll know we achieved our outcomes

- Engagement: Member participation (attendance, contributions) and partner coordination (cross-sector partners, payers, policy, providers)
- Reach: Attendance at webinars and peer learning sessions
- Satisfaction: Participant feedback from webinar and meeting surveys
- Knowledge & Capacity: Self-reported knowledge and readiness to implement expanded coverage (surveys)
- Adoption: Use of expanded coverage opportunities (member surveys, intention to apply, testimonials)
- Outputs: # and types of resources developed, updated, and shared; # and types of events held

Roundtable Functions



Convening Partners



Developing National Strategies



Building Evidence



Professional Education



System, Practice, & Policy Changes


Priority 5


Ethical Integration of Digital Technology in Navigation



Outcomes: by 2029 we'll have achieved

- **Ethical Standards:** Create guidelines for digital technology, including AI, that are used by navigators to ensure practices are ethical, equitable, and patient-centered.
- **Aligned Principles:** Roundtable members and partners are aligned around shared principles and standards for technology adoption in oncology navigation.
- **Informed Practice:** Navigators and health systems have clear guidance on how to use technology to improve-not hinder-the patient experience.

Activities: how we'll achieve our outcomes

 **Facilitate Value Dialogue:** Convene health care leaders and navigators with technology experts and users to identify shared values and ethical priorities for technology in navigation.

 **Conduct Landscape Assessment:** Map current digital tool usage to identify opportunities where technology can best enhance equitable care.


 **Disseminate Ethical Guidance:** Create actionable guidance and showcase case studies of ethical tech adoption that benefit both patients and navigators.

Measures: how we'll know we achieved our outcomes

- Engagement: Member participation (attendance, contributions) and partner coordination (advocates, technology experts)
- Reach: Attendance at webinars and convenings
- Satisfaction: Participant feedback from webinar and meeting surveys
- Knowledge & Capacity: Self-reported knowledge and readiness to implement ethical technology strategies (surveys)
- Adoption: Use of ethical technology strategies (member surveys, intention to apply, testimonials)
- Outputs: # and types of resources developed, updated, and shared; # and types of events held

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