

Cynthia Kline O'Sullivan, RN, MSN, PhD

Cynthia Kline O'Sullivan, RN, MSN, PhD is Associate Professor of Nursing at Southern Connecticut State University. She earned her BSN from Pennsylvania State University in 1981, her MSN with a concentration in Acute and Critical Care of Adults from the



University of Pennsylvania in 1986, and her PhD in Nursing from Yale University in 2011. Over her 30-year career, Dr. O'Sullivan has held positions of staff nurse, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Nurse Manager, and nursing faculty. She served in administrative positions within large university medical centers for over 11 years as well as on Boards of Directors for several professional organizations. She currently serves on the executive board of the Connecticut Coalition to Improve End of Life Care, a non-profit organization whose purpose is to develop a comprehensive approach to improving care and support to dying patients and their families through education, research, and policy initiatives. She is also serves on the CLN Informatics Task Force, a state-wide group of nursing faculty, charged with developing and integrating effective options for incorporating informatics into the nursing curricula at all levels of nursing education.

Dr. O'Sullivan was awarded the Nurse Management Excellence Award in 1994 from the Massachusetts Organization of Nurse Executives/Massachusetts Organization of Nurse Managers and a Nightingale Award for her work in Nursing Education in 2002. She received a pre-doctoral fellowship from the United States Department of Defense in 2004 for her doctoral work, which explores psychological distress among women undergoing treatment for ovarian cancer.

Program of Research and Scholarship

Primary Focus Areas:

- **Psychological Distress and in Cancer**
- **Patient Problems during Cancer Treatment**
- **Nursing Interventions**
- **The Omaha System**
- **End of Life Issues**
- **Validity and Reliability in Mixed Methods Research**

Dr. O'Sullivan's doctoral dissertation incorporated both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to analyze problems experienced by women with ovarian cancer over time, as well as nursing interventions targeted to improve their quality of life. This method, which utilized the Omaha System, allowed Dr. O'Sullivan to begin to examine

intricacies of the interactions between patients and nurses as an initial step in uncovering the unique value that nurses provide during the illness continuum, to include best practices at the end of life. The results of her dissertation have been published in a peer-reviewed journal and an invited book chapter. This work addresses important implications for clinical practice, education, and health policy.

Dr. O'Sullivan's understanding of the obstacles patients experience due to health policy and finance factors was enriched by her clinical experiences with women who suffered from psychological issues during the ovarian cancer treatment; this work resulted in publications focused on health care policy and finance issues regarding mental health care. Earlier in her career, Dr. O'Sullivan authored a number of articles and book chapters focused on clinical management of critically-ill patients. She is currently examining the use of the Omaha System as a potential method of teaching and evaluating critical thinking and nursing interventions in nursing education.

Sample Listing of Publications:

O'Sullivan, CK, Ercolano, E, McCorkle, R. (2012). Palliative Care in Ovarian Cancer. In Schwartz, PE (ed). *Advances in Ovarian Cancer Management*. London: Future Science Group.

O'Sullivan, CK, Bowles, KH, Jeon, S, Ercolano, E, McCorkle, R. (2011). Psychological Distress during Ovarian Cancer Treatment: Improving Quality by Examining Patient Problems and Advanced Practice Nursing Interventions. *Nursing Research and Practice*, vol. 2011, Article ID 351642, 14 pages, 2011. doi:10.1155/2011/351642

O'Sullivan, CK & Krauss, JB. (2007). True mental health parity. *The American Journal of Nursing*, 107(1), 77-79.

Krauss, JB & **O'Sullivan, CK**. (2007). Mental health parity: will it ever happen? In DJ Mason, JK Leavitt & MW Chaffee (eds.) *Policy & Politics in Nursing & Health Care*. St. Louis: Saunders/Elsevier.

O'Sullivan, CK & Vitello-Cicciu, JM (2001). Hemodynamic Monitoring. In Sole, M.L., Lamborn, M.L., and Hartshorn, J. (eds). *Introduction to Critical Care Nursing*. (3rd ed), Phila.: W.B. Saunders.

Stewart, S, **O'Sullivan, CK**, Vitello-Cicciu, JM & Brown, MM. (1993). Cardiac Surgery. In Kinney, M., Packa, D., Dunbar, S. (eds). *AACN's Clinical Reference for Critical Care Nursing* 3rd ed.), St. Louis: C.V. Mosby Yearbook.

Sample Listing of Presentations:

"Using the Omaha System to Evaluate Patient Problems and Nursing Interventions in Relation to Psychological Distress in Ovarian Cancer," 2011 Omaha System International Conference, Eagan Minnesota, April, 2011.

"Targeting Advanced Practice Nursing Interventions to Patient Problems in Ovarian Cancer," American Psychosocial Oncology Society Annual Conference, Anaheim, CA, February, 2011.