

UNIVERSITY OF
LOUISVILLE
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE



MJHS
INSTITUTE FOR INNOVATION
IN PALLIATIVE CARE

Feedback from ESPEC Oncology participants:

- “The most impactful aspect has been the robust amount of research, practical tools, and opportunities to learn from peers across diverse backgrounds.”
- “Hearing how other oncology social workers integrate palliative care gave me the tools—and excitement—to grow this part of my own practice.”
- “Sharing space with leaders in the field inspired me and affirmed that I, too, can do great things in oncology social work.”

***Cohort #2* Applications are now open for competitively selected
ESPEC Oncology training scholarships!
Space is limited!
Applications are due June 30th, 2026**

The University of Louisville is pleased to collaborate with the MJHS Institute for Innovation and the Association of Oncology Social Work (AOSW), with ongoing support from the National Cancer Institute (R25). Through this federal investment, **we are offering 50 competitively selected scholarships for Cohort #2 of the *Educating Social Workers in Palliative and End-of-Life Care in Oncology: Transforming Psychosocial and Palliative Cancer Care (ESPEC Oncology)*** training program. This program is part of a five-year research study, and individuals must enroll as research participants to be considered for training scholarships.

ESPEC Oncology is a comprehensive, evidence-informed training program designed specifically for oncology social workers. Building on prior *ESPEC* initiatives (including *ESPEC Core*, *ESPEC-O*, and AOSW pre-conference workshops), this program offers an enhanced curriculum with a more intensive, practice-focused training experience. The program emphasizes the integration of psychosocial oncology and primary palliative care, equipping participants with the skills to lead practice transformation within interdisciplinary cancer care teams.

Program Overview

ESPEC Oncology is an innovative professional education and training program designed by social workers, for social workers, focused on primary palliative care. *ESPEC Oncology* seeks to enhance oncology social workers' knowledge, skills, and competence, increase their visibility, and position them for leadership roles within their healthcare teams.

Scholarships provide:

- ✓ Registration fee for entire curriculum (online self-study modules, in-person skills workshop, and mentorship webinars-37.0 CE)
- ✓ Airfare
- ✓ 2 nights' hotel accommodation
- ✓ Conference meals
- ✓ Workshop materials (slides, instructional videos, Best Practice Guides, resources)

Training Components (37.0 CE):

Part I – Online Self-Study (8.0 CE)

- Must be completed by October 23rd, 2026
- Modules are based on the 8 Domains of Palliative Care
- Includes videos, interactive exercises, knowledge checks, and reflective questions

Part IA – Foundational Webinars (3.0 CE)

- Welcome and Overview: Friday, August 7th at 1:00-2:30 PM Eastern (webinar)
- Leadership & Organizational: Friday, October 30th at 1:00-2:30 PM Eastern (webinar)

Part II – In-Person Skills Workshop (14.0 CE)

- November 8th–10th, 2026
- Live skills-based training with clinical scenarios and guided practice
- Focus: biopsychosocial-spiritual assessment, family meetings, advance care planning, interprofessional communication, advocacy, social determinants of health

Part III – Monthly Educational Webinars (12.0 CE)

- Eight monthly 1.5-hour webinars: Fridays 1:00-2:30 PM Eastern
- Sample topics: Best Practices in Teamwork; Moral Distress; Strategies for Success
- Focus: Faculty mentorship plus skills implementation in your practice setting

Learning Objectives

Participants will:

1. Apply the 8 domains of palliative care to oncology social work practice
2. Strengthen clinical skills in palliative care for patients, caregivers, and colleagues
3. Use *ESPEC Oncology* training to promote leadership, advocacy, and practice transformation

Benefits of Participation

- Innovative palliative care training specifically designed for oncology social workers
- Ready-to-use slides, instructional videos, and Best Practice Guides
- Certificate of Completion and recognition as an *ESPEC Oncology Scholar*

Eligibility & Commitment

To be selected, participants must:

- Submit the online application by June 30th, 2026
- Participate in the Foundational Webinars on August 7th and October 30th, 2026
- Complete the online self-study modules by October 23rd, 2026
- Attend the November 8th–10th, 2026, In-Person Workshop
- Attend the monthly online webinars (SWK CE provided)
- Complete pre- and post-training surveys and progress reports
- Implement practice-change action steps in your home institution

Faculty & Leadership

Led by Principal Investigator

- Tara Schapmire, PhD, OSW-C, APHSW-C, FAPOS, FAOSW

With Co-Investigators:

- Myra Glajchen, DSW, MSW, BSW, ACSW, APHSW-C, FAOSW
- Shirley Otis-Green, MSW, MA, ACSW, LCSW, OSW-CE, FNAP, FAOSW
- Brad Zebrack, PhD, MSW, MPH, FAPOS, FAOSW
- Barbara Jones, PhD, FAPOS, FAOSW

Application Instructions

This is a **competitive application for intensive training**, so please read the instructions provided in the application packet carefully and provide all required information. Use the checklist to make sure that all the required information is included in your application.

The application has been formatted electronically using Qualtrics. Accompanying letters of support should be emailed to ESPECO@louisville.edu. **The letter of support must be submitted for the application to be complete. Incomplete applications will not be considered.**

Application Deadline: Applications will be reviewed, and participants will be accepted on a rolling basis beginning on June 15th, 2026.

All applications are due June 30th, 2026.

Acceptance notices will be sent out weekly, as applications are reviewed. All additional information about *ESPEC Oncology* is available in this brochure. Once accepted, participants will receive further information about registration. For any questions, or for assistance in completing the application or the overall project, please contact ESPECO@louisville.edu

Application Checklist

- General Applicant Information
- Confirmation of status as an oncology social worker
- Institutional Information
- Statement of Interest, Goals, and Commitment
- One Letter of Support from a supervisor/administrator on institutional or organizational letterhead*

***Letter must explicitly confirm support and time release for your in-person and online participation and completion of all course requirements:**

- **Completion** of all online self-study modules and 2 webinars prior to the in-person training
- **Attendance** at the in-person training workshop in its entirety
- **Participation** in the monthly educational webinars and mentorship sessions
- **Application** of *ESPEC Oncology: Transforming Psychosocial and Palliative Cancer Care* lessons learned to your setting to enhance the delivery of cancer care
- **Completion** of all progress reports
- **Completion** of all evaluation components

[Apply Here](#)

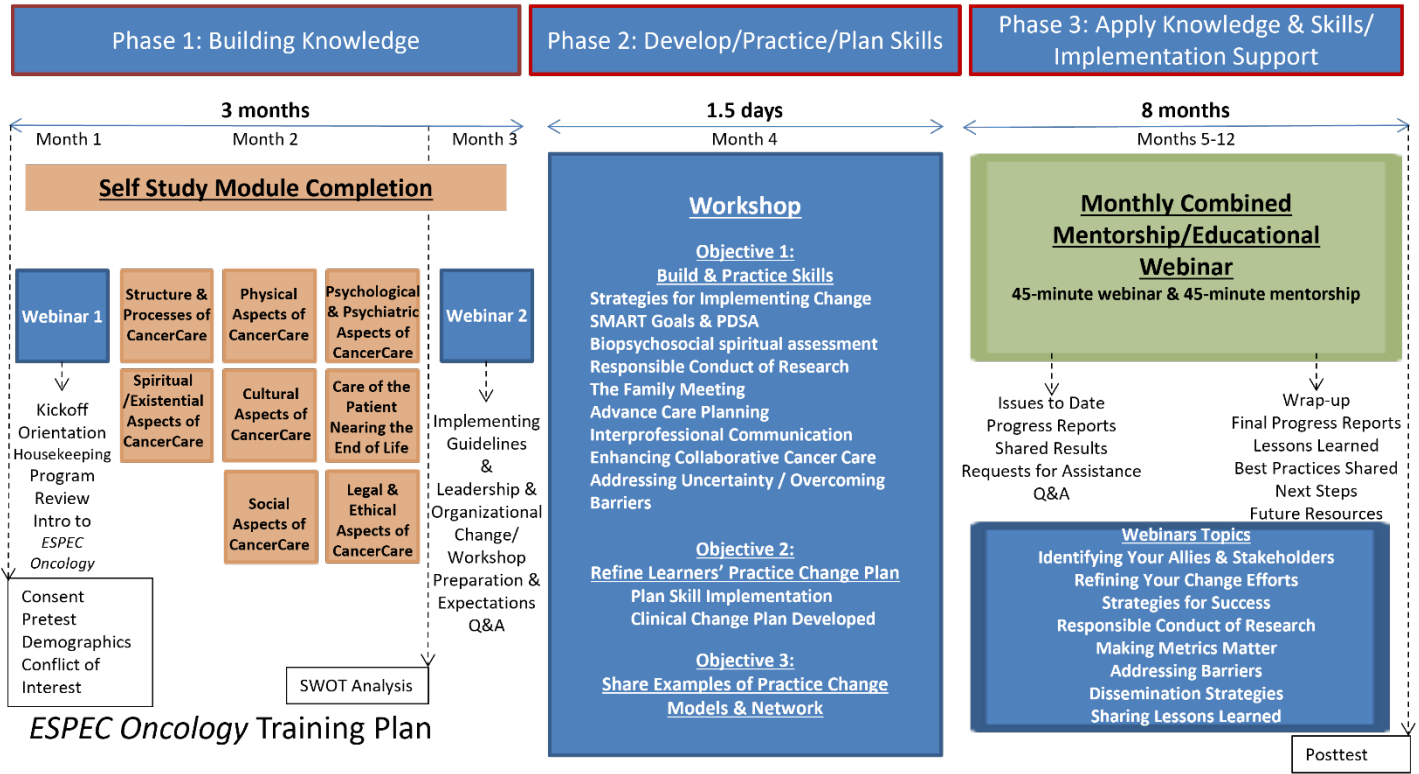


Or copy the link below into your browser: https://uoflsom.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0fz4mstzlaTMkxo

Training Details & Timeline

The year-long ESPEC Oncology program unfolds in three phases:

- **Part 1:** Build knowledge through online self-study modules and introductory webinars (**August 2026–October 2026**)
- **Part 2:** Develop and practice skills during a 2-day in-person workshop (**November 8-10, 2026**)
- **Part 3:** Apply learning with monthly mentorship and educational webinars (**Dec 2026–July 2027**)



ESPEC Oncology In-Person Skills Workshop Agenda*

14 CEs

Day One, approximately 8 AM to 5 PM Central	
Session #1:	Become an Effective Advocate and Leader
Session #2:	Effective Interprofessional Communication, Enhancing Collaborative Cancer Care
Session #3:	Biopsychosocial Spiritual Assessment in Oncology
Session #4:	The Family Meeting in Oncology
Day Two, approximately 8 AM to 3 PM Central	
Session #5:	Serious Illness Communication: Ensuring Goal-Concordant Care
Session #6:	Create Change in Cancer Care: Collect Data, Apply Findings, Set Goals, Measure Outcomes
Session #7:	Building the Foundation for Sustainable Practice

**Agenda is subject to change: a detailed agenda will be provided prior to the workshop*

Course Location & Accommodations

The Renaissance Chicago O'Hare Suites Hotel is a 362-room, 4-star all-suite hotel located near O'Hare International Airport, offering complimentary shuttle service to the airport, and easy access to the city via the nearby Blue Line. It features spacious suites with separate living and sleeping areas, an indoor pool and whirlpool, a fitness center, on-site dining options including Starbucks, and extensive meeting facilities.

Course Location: Renaissance Chicago O'Hare Suites

8500 West Bryn Mawr Avenue
Chicago, IL 60631
773-380-9600

Check In: 4:00 PM
Check Out: 11:00 AM

Hotel Accommodation arranged by the University of Louisville

Accepted participants will receive a two (2) night stay at this hotel for the dates below. The ESPEC Oncology Staff will make your hotel reservations. Per hotel policy, all guests must present a photo ID and credit card upon check-in for incidentals.

2 nights reserved for:
Sun, November 8th & Mon,
November 9th



Participants needing additional nights beyond the 2 listed above will be responsible for payment. Room rates are \$179.00 per night, which comes to \$210 with tax and fees (based on availability). ESPEC Oncology staff will connect with accepted participants and make reservations on their behalf. Please do not contact the hotel unless directed by the program staff.

Transportation & Parking

The ESPEC Oncology staff will arrange your flight reservations. For those choosing to drive, the Renaissance Chicago O'Hare Suites will provide complimentary parking for ESPEC Oncology participants.

Transportation from Airport:

Ground transportation from Chicago O'Hare Airport to the Renaissance Hotel will be provided by the hotel's complimentary shuttle.

Airport

Chicago O'Hare Airport – 3 miles

ESPEC Oncology: Transforming Psychosocial & Palliative Cancer Care

ESPEC Oncology Principal Investigator & Project Director/Faculty



Tara J Schapmire, PhD, MSSW, OSW-C, APHSW-C, FAPOS, FAOSW
Principal Investigator of ESPEC Oncology: Transforming Psychosocial & Palliative Cancer Care
Associate Professor, School of Medicine, Honorary Associate Professor, Kent School of Social Work & Family Science, University of Louisville
Editor-In-Chief, Journal of Psychosocial Oncology



Myra Glajchen, DSW, MSW, BSW, ACSW, APHSW-C, FAOSW
Project Director for Educating Social Workers in Palliative and End-of-Life Care (ESPEC)
Director of Education and Training, MJHS Institute; Co-Investigator, ESPEC Oncology: Transforming Psychosocial and Palliative Cancer Care

ESPEC Oncology Co-Investigators/Faculty



Shirley Otis-Green, MSW, MA, ACSW, LCSW, OSW-C, FNAP, FAOSW
Co-director for Educating Social Workers in Palliative and End-of-Life Care (ESPEC)
Founder and Consultant, Collaborative Caring



Barbara Jones, PhD, MSW, FAPOS, FAOSW
Dean and Professor, Boston University School of Social Work
National Advisory Board Member, Sojourns Scholars Palliative Care Leadership Program



Brad Zebrack, PhD, MSW, MPH, FAPOS, FAOSW
Professor of Social Work
University of Michigan School of Social Work

ESPEC Oncology Staff



Bonika Peters, MPH
Program Manager of ESPEC Oncology: Transforming Psychosocial & Palliative Cancer Care,
Palliative Medicine, University of Louisville School of Medicine