

Utilising curricula to develop skills in practice

Prof Sara Faithfull,
Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences,
University of Surrey, UK
Past President EONS



Aim

- Overall to highlight importance of how curricula can influence skill development
- Critically review integration of transferable skills in continuing professional development
 - Ask do we need them? What are they?
- Explore teaching models for integration
- Review EONS specialist cancer curricula and ask what are the transferable skills?
- Conclude with models of transferable skills and progression of implementation



Introduction: challenges

- ▶ Rapidity of change in health care settings
 - ▶ Diversity of roles and skills required
 - ▶ Flexibility with roles development
- ▶ Political agenda affecting education E
 - ▶ U Bologna,
 - ▶ Employment and mobility
- ▶ Lack of integration within EU specialist academic education and workplace opportunities



Evidence of lack of integration of specialist transferable skills

- EONS survey of accredited professional courses
- Purchaser provider split
- Lack of consensus on definition of specialist role
- EU policy



EONS review (2005)

- ▶ Feedback on long courses accredited by EONS in the last 5 years (n=11 out of 16)
- ▶ Over 300 nurses had gone through programmes of study in the last year
 - ▶ most of them have used the EONS core curriculum as a framework to develop educational programmes
 - ▶ Few have academic or HE accreditation
 - ▶ Few evaluate practice as part of education
- ▶ The impact of education on cancer practice is lacking



What are transferable skills?

- Difficult to define?
- Contextual?
- Ambiguity?

Transferable skills are by their nature skills used across different contexts

Learnt in education and applied to employment

Fieldhouse R (1998) Embedding transferrable skills in the adult education curriculum, *Adults and Learning* 9(5) 12-14







Transferable specialist nurse skills?

Holistic Assessment

Communication skills

Patient education

Case management

Leadership

Evidence based intervention

Multi professional working

Formal definition

- Defined as those skills that are central to occupational competence in all sectors and all levels (DfEE 1997)
- Include project management, leadership, communication, working in teams and problem solving

Drummond et al. (1998) Personal transferable skills in higher education: the problems of implementing good practice, *Quality Assurance in Education* 6(1) 19-22



Argument

- Is broader practice competence being displaced with a more operational competence geared towards the workplace?
- Are employer expectations and demands on vocational education too high ?
- Is adaptability the new buzz word?
- Do academics have those transferable skills themselves?



Are they important?

- Change roles and specialist employment over time
- Nurse's need to develop new skills and enhance old ones
- Role substitution and innovation
- Unique qualities of professional role

De La Harpe B & Radloff A (2000) Helping academic staff to integrate professional skills In Fallow S & Steve C (eds) Integrating key skills in higher education, London 165-179



Teaching and learning strategies

- **Embedding:** no direct reference is made to transferable skills and the emphasis is on promoting the development of task “know how”
- **Bolting on:** Skills are developed independently of the core discipline, enabling explicit development
- **Integrating:** skills are developed and taught explicitly within the core discipline

Chandra D (2006 Considering a teaching framework to support the development of transferable skills in engineering undergraduates (Unpublished PhD, Surrey)



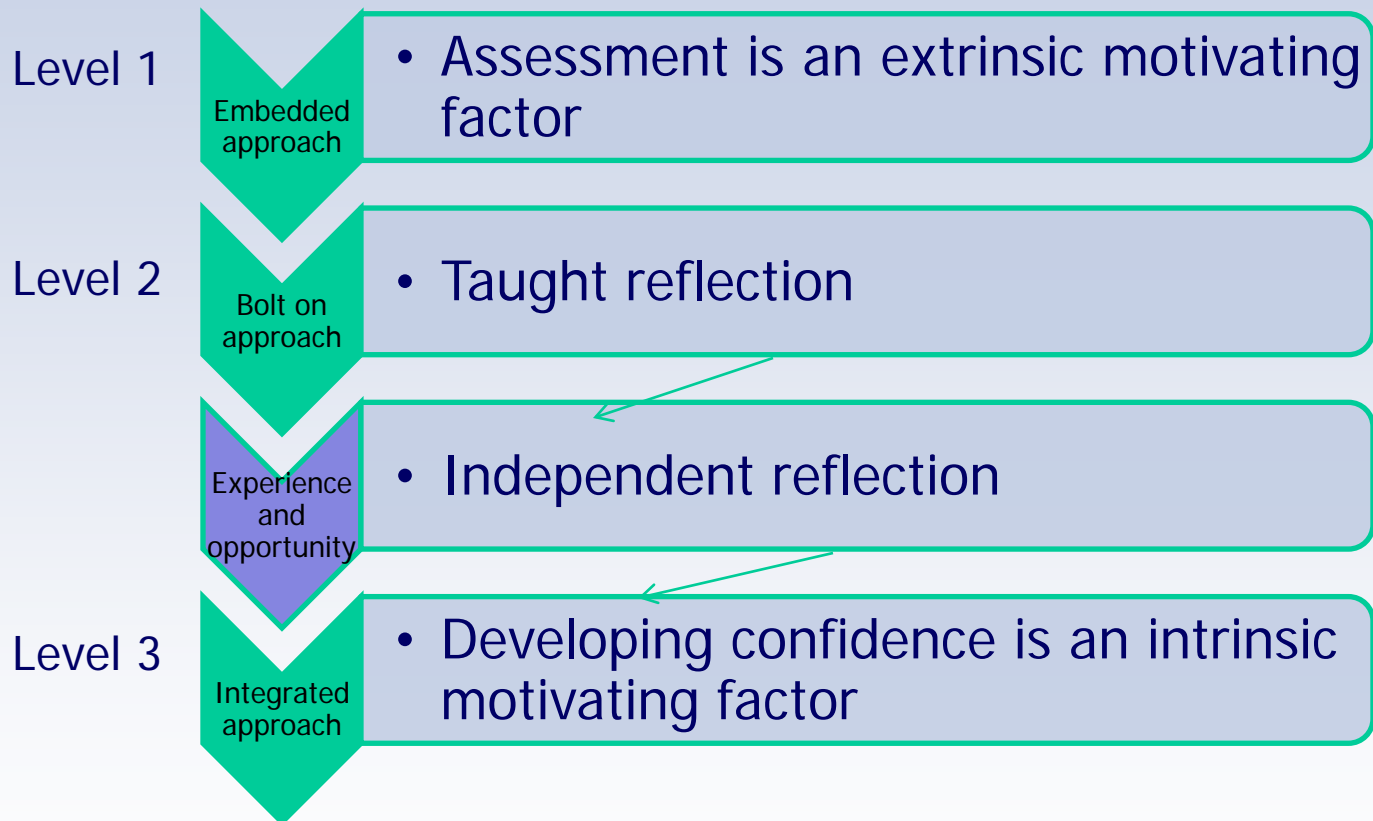
Integration

- Greater support for the integration of skills into the curriculum
- Research also suggests more effective approach more like “real life” application
- Transferable skills can then be lost in the delivery?
- Skills Gap?

Atlay M & Harris R (2000) An institutional approach to developing students' transferable skills. *Innovations in Education and Training International* 37(1) 76-81



Implementation of all three strategies



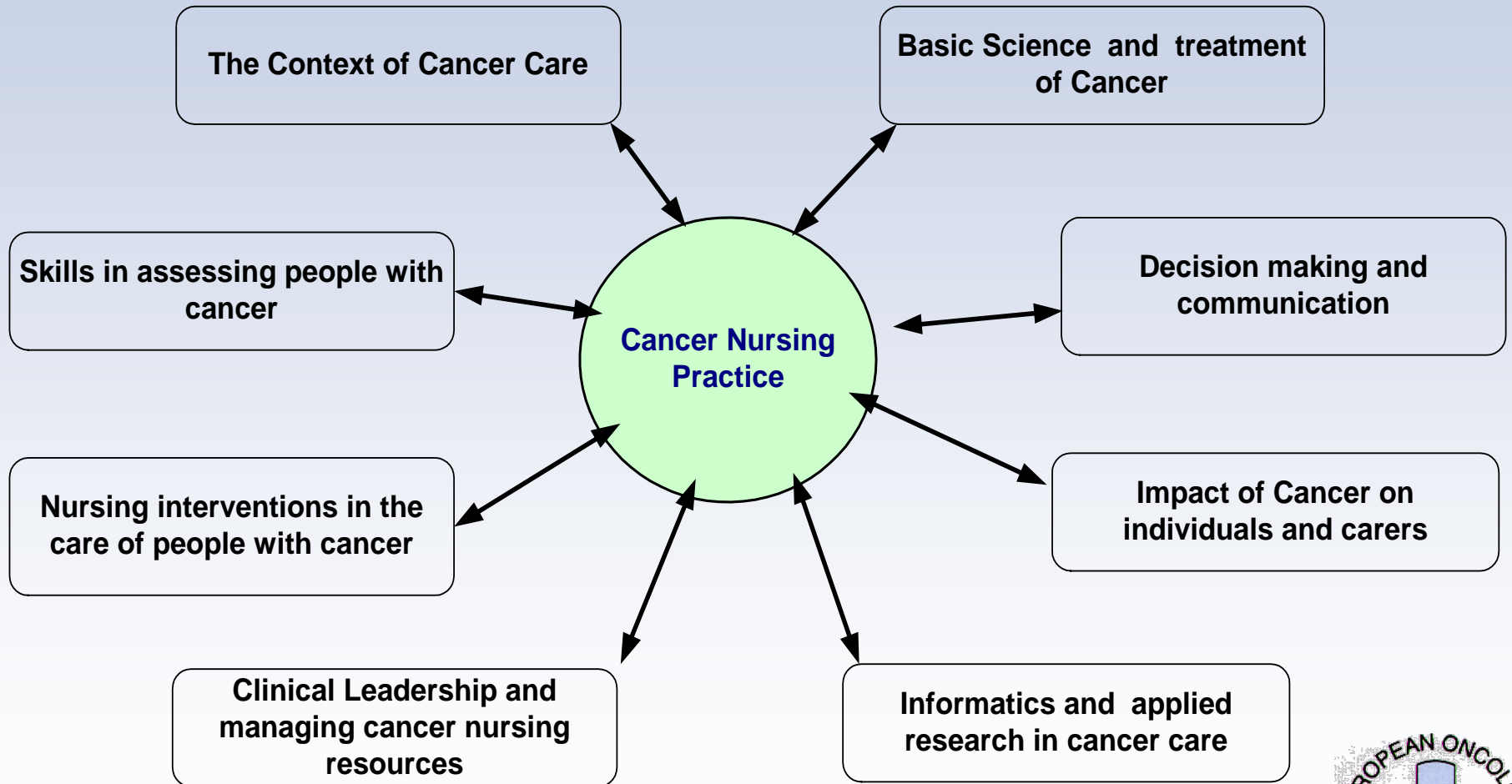
Chandra D (2006) A curriculum model for transferable skills



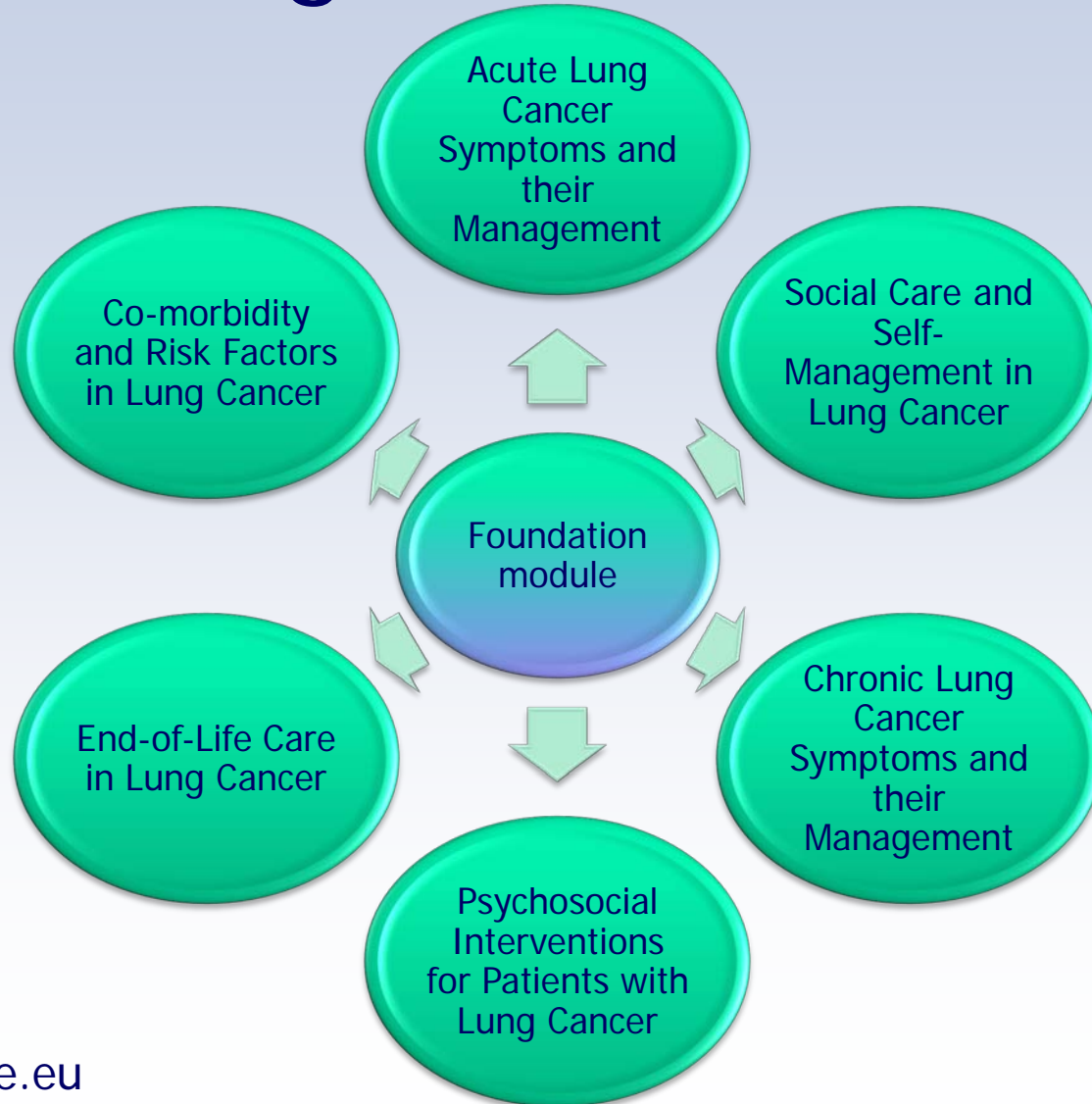
Anderson's nursing role and functions model



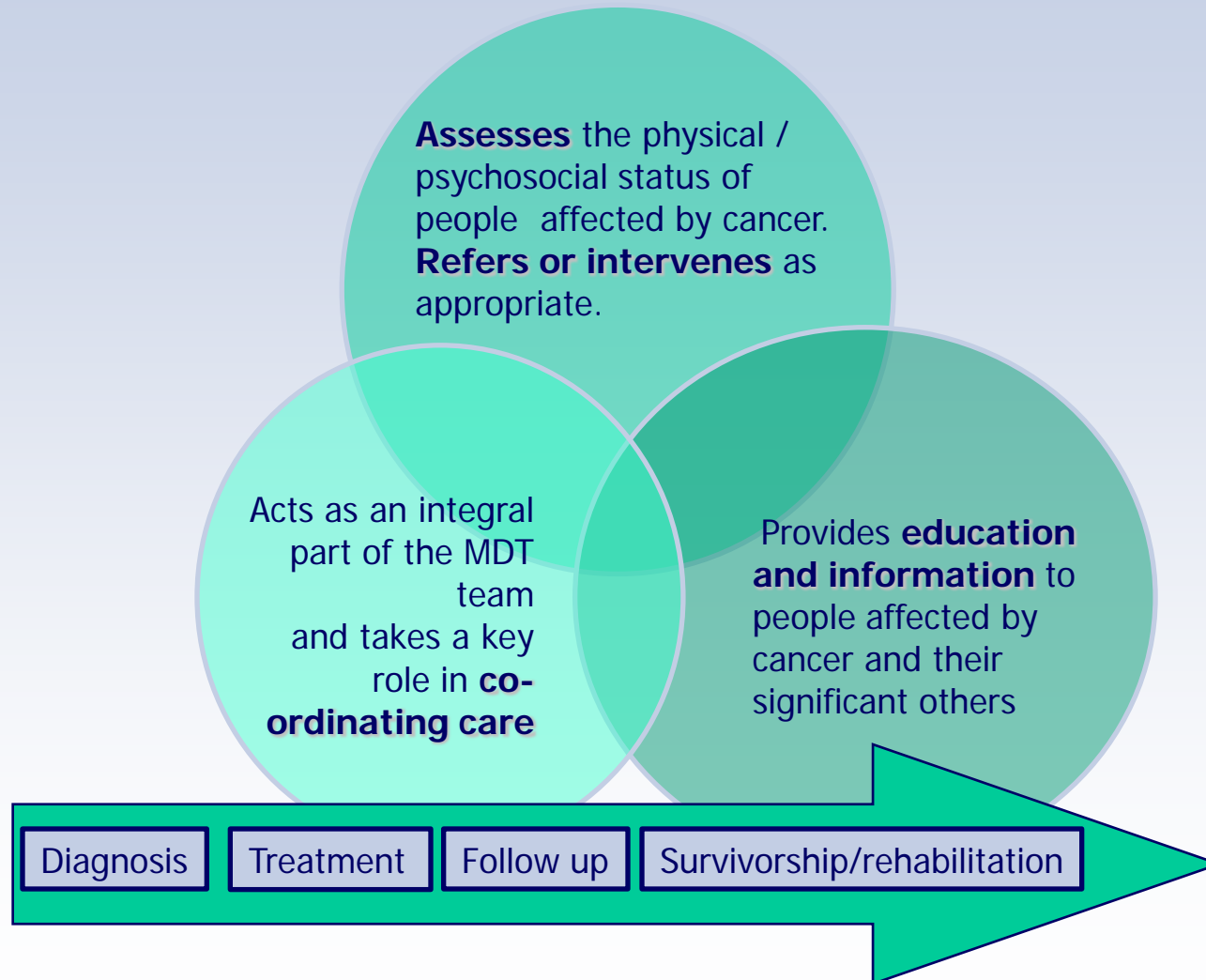
EONS Curriculum framework (2005)



EONS Lung cancer curriculum



Three dimensions of transferable skills



Transferable skills

- Identifying skills
- Curricula alignment
- Embedding
- Addressing the levels
- Contextualising skills development



Challenges

- ▶ Defining specialist nurse competency across Europe: is it possible through curricula?
- ▶ Wide variation in content and specification of cancer nursing roles in Europe: can we meet everyone's educational needs?
- ▶ Growing more cancer nurses: most European countries have nursing shortages
- ▶ Lack of standardisation and recognition of professional development of nurses in many countries: can developing transferable skills help?



Having the skills to stay ahead

