

## TITAN: Modifying an Innovative American Program for Use With a European Audience

<b>Authors</b>	Training Initiatives in Thrombocytopenia, Anemia, and Neutropenia (TITAN) Working Group: Karin Ahlberg, Pascale Dielenseger, Shelley Dolan, Jan Foubert, Maria Munoz, Jan Ouwerkerk, and Mary Uhlenhopp; Appropriate Treatment Assures Quality (ATAQ): Debra Wujcik
<b>Origin of Study</b>	Europe
<b>Type of Study</b>	MODEL OF CONTINUING NURSING EDUCATION ON THROMBOCYTOPENIA, ANEMIA, AND NEUTROPENIA
<b>Objectives</b>	Provide learning opportunities for nurses in the United States via a model that includes lectures, group work, and a unique dissemination plan.
<b>Study Design</b>	<p>In 1999, the innovative Appropriate Treatment Assures Quality (ATAQ) education program was funded by the Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) Foundation Center for Leadership, Information, and Research for the US population of oncology nurses to improve the management of neutropenia. The program began with a one-day course that was presented to over 600 nurses; a teaching model then was developed, adapted, and improved upon for other ONS programs. The project was continued in 2001–2002 and was presented at 10 regional conferences attended by 450 nurses. In 2003, other projects included the NeutroPhil patient education materials, the vast dissemination of the Knowledgey CD-ROM, a monograph of continuous quality improvement initiatives, and a series of conferences available over the Internet. That year, a finalized program was held at a national conference for 200 participants, who were asked to develop a plan for disseminating the information learned. ONS documented over 20,000 staff, patients, and family members who received information via the program.</p> <p>A course on symptomatic management of myelosuppressed patients was renamed Training Initiatives in Thrombocytopenia, Anemia, and Neutropenia (TITAN). A working group was formed to examine changes that would need to be made and obstacles that had to be overcome for use of the program in Europe; the members attended the national conference to gain ideas for the TITAN program structure and to define priority topics. The TITAN team developed a learning needs assessment that took differences in practice from one European country to the next, having received input from 455 European nurses.</p> <p>The TITAN team sought to allow nurses to assume responsibility; to provide education, good literature, measurements to assess and manage neutropenia, and to help nurses to provide a good quality of care. After materials were developed, they were translated into Dutch, French, German, Italian, and Spanish. The team ran four pilot courses in 2004 with assistance from the national oncology nursing societies in Ireland, France, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom to find out whether the program was effective and relevant; it was important to run these programs in different countries, since nurses have different roles in different nations.</p> <p>The TITAN course lasts for 7 hours as compared with the 2 days needed for the ATAQ program; most European nurses are allowed to attend training programs that last up to 8 hours. The program begins with precourse reading to start all nurses at the same level; this preliminary work leads to an evidence-based course and a dissemination project to be completed within 6 months. It is practice-driven, reflects the diversity of cancer nursing practices across Europe, is accredited by the European Oncology Nursing Society (EONS), and is available in various languages.</p>
<b>Observations</b>	Feedback has been positive. According to formal course evaluations, nurses were pleased with the structure and content. They also believed the level of the presentations to be excellent and the case studies to represent a good learning tool; the guidelines and assessment tools were well received.

**TITAN: Modifying an Innovative American Program for Use With a European Audience****Conclusions**

In 2005, 6 courses will run in 20 countries. This represents the first time in history that one course has been carried out in so many different nations. The success may come from its systematic approach and its adaptation to a new population of professionals, no matter what the language barrier.

**Discussion**

The innovative educational program ATAQ, funded by the ONS Foundation Center for Leadership, Information, and Research to provide learning opportunities for nurses in the US, has proven useful for European nurses as well, said Debra Wujcik, RN, MSN, ACON, of Vanderbilt Cancer Center, Nashville, Tennessee.

“There is a lot of applicability and generalizability from the projects that are done in the United States that allow them to be taken to international audiences. ATAQ is a model of teaching nurses that can be adapted for use with audiences internationally,” Ms. Wujcik said.

The ATAQ teaching model included lectures, group work, and a unique dissemination plan, where the nurses who attended the program were expected to develop a specific plan to put into practice the information they learned. One ATAQ course was on symptom management of thrombocytopenia, neutropenia, and anemia for patients with myelosuppression. It was this particular program that crossed the ocean with a new name: TITAN.

A difference in nursing practice between Europe and the United States was the relative lack of funding for nurses to attend continuing education programs in Europe. Diversity of languages is another obstacle when it comes to organizing learning materials and courses, said Jan Foubert, President and Treasurer of EONS.

“Europe is expanding rapidly and there is a significant diversity in cancer nursing practice. There is a difference between the north and south, east and west. After doing a careful needs assessment, the EONS felt strongly that educational initiatives should be based on expert opinions, that they be practice driven and reflect the diversity of cancer nursing practice across Europe, be accredited by EONS, and be available in as many languages as possible, because, although English is common in Europe, it is not as common as many people think,” said Mr. Foubert.

TITAN adopted the dissemination project as part of its learning initiative, which was a novelty for Europe. This, said Mr. Foubert, was an excellent choice. “Dissemination was the best part. As an educator and manager, most people will ask me, what did the training change? People who invest in you also want a return, so although it was a big challenge, disseminating knowledge into Europe was a success,” Mr. Foubert said.

Overall, the feedback about TITAN has been very positive, Mr. Foubert said. “TITAN is a success. We have 6 courses in 2005, which will be run in 20 countries. We should not reinvent the wheel but use knowledge and adapt it in a culturally sensitive way. TITAN shows the value of international collaboration to avoid duplication of effort,” he concluded.

**Key Points**

The TITAN program represents a systematic approach to modifying the ATAQ program in a culturally sensitive way and exhibits the value of international collaboration to avoid duplication of effort.

Translation was the key to the success of this program; future programs brought to Europe from other parts of the world should reflect this detail of adaptation.

**References**

Training Initiatives in Thrombocytopenia, Anemia, and Neutropenia (TITAN) Working Group: Ahlberg K, Dielenseger P, Dolan S, Foubert J, Munoz M, Ouwerkerk J, Uhlenhopp M; Appropriate Treatment Assures Quality (ATAQ): Wujcik D. Modifying an innovative American program for use with a European audience. Discussion session at the 30th Annual Congress of the Oncology Nursing Society; April 27–May 1, 2005; Orlando, Fla. Discussion session 11.