ACS LION™ Training and Credentialing Program
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Background

Thirty years of research and real-world implementation have consistently shown that patient navigation improves cancer outcomes and reduces health disparities. However, the absence of reimbursement for navigation services has forced cancer providers to rely on external funding or absorb the cost as an unreimbursed administrative expense. As a result, navigation services have been inconsistently available, with wide variation in both the types of services offered and their impact.

In 2024, for the first time, the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule introduced a sustainable reimbursement pathway for non-clinical navigation through the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) **Principal Illness Navigation (PIN)** payment policy. This new policy not only enables reimbursement but also establishes professional expectations and training requirements for non-clinical navigators— raising the national standard for navigation services. Training and credentialing will help build a standardized professional knowledge base and positively impact oncology patients by expanding access to high-quality navigation programs and services. Standardized training will also help reduce barriers and health disparities among various patient groups.

This document is designed to help professional navigators, cancer care providers, and other stakeholders understand the **ACS Leadership in Oncology Navigation (ACS LION)** program and address frequently asked questions. It will be updated as new information becomes available. For additional questions, challenges, or barriers not addressed here, please contact **ACSLION@cancer.org**.

For detailed information about the PIN payment policy introduced in the CY2024 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule—including codes targeting health-related social needs that took effect on January 1, 2024—please refer to the accompanying **ACS LION PIN Payment** **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)** document.

Frequently Asked Questions

How is this program unique to others on the market?
The ACS LION Credential is a recognized qualification that is directly aligned with job functions, navigation professional standards, and reimbursement eligibility. The curriculum is focused, competency-based, and self-paced. Developed by the American Cancer Society—a leader in oncology care and advocacy—ACS LION is created by practitioners for practitioners. Content developers bring firsthand, real-world experience from oncology settings, ensuring the curriculum reflects the complexities and realities of patient navigation across diverse care settings. ACS is committed to staying abreast of the changing oncology landscape by providing updated training annually and additional professional development through specialty certificates. The summative assessment is fully virtual, allowing the learner the flexibility of completing it around their

schedule, while still demonstrating program rigor as an assessment-based credential. ACS LION is more than a training program—it's a movement to professionalize and elevate the role of patient navigators in cancer care. The distinction empowers both individuals and organizations to demonstrate competency, compliance, and commitment to high-quality navigation services. With cutting-edge content, real-world relevance, and a mission-driven foundation, ACS LION is the premier choice for professionals and organizations seeking impact, value, and leadership in patient navigation.
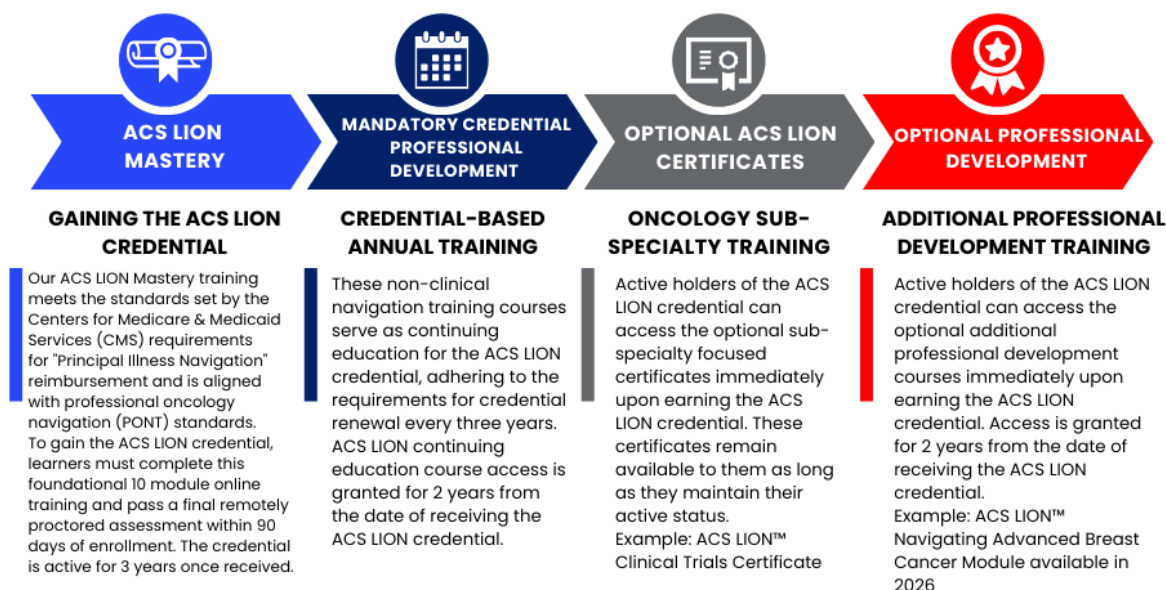
Program benefits for navigators:

- Greater credibility with the formal endorsement of your patient navigation expertise
- Improved knowledge and skills of the complex cancer care system
- Enhanced understanding of how to tailor support to patient needs
- Preparation for greater responsibility and professional development

Program benefits for oncology practices:

- Enhanced role clarity and defined scope for non-clinical patient navigators
- Increased recognition and commitment to the diverse needs of patients, caregivers, and community
- Ability to meet CMS training requirements for providing principal illness navigation services eligible for reimbursement

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ACS LION Credential Education Opportunities

ACS LION MASTERY	MANDATORY CREDENTIAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	OPTIONAL ACS LION CERTIFICATES	OPTIONAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
GAINING THE ACS LION CREDENTIAL	**CREDENTIAL-BASED ANNUAL TRAINING**	**ONCOLOGY SUB-SPECIALTY TRAINING**	**ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING**
Our ACS LION Mastery training meets the standards set by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) requirements for "Principal Illness Navigation" reimbursement and is aligned with professional oncology navigation (PONT) standards. To gain the ACS LION credential, learners must complete this foundational 10 module online training and pass a final remotely proctored assessment within 90 days of enrollment. The credential is active for 3 years once received.	These non-clinical navigation training courses serve as continuing education for the ACS LION credential, adhering to the requirements for credential renewal every three years. ACS LION continuing education course access is granted for 2 years from the date of receiving the ACS LION credential.	Active holders of the ACS LION credential can access the optional sub-specialty focused certificates immediately upon earning the ACS LION credential. These certificates remain available to them as long as they maintain their active status. Example: ACS LION™ Clinical Trials Certificate	Active holders of the ACS LION credential can access the optional additional professional development courses immediately upon earning the ACS LION credential. Access is granted for 2 years from the date of receiving the ACS LION credential. Example: ACS LION™ Navigating Advanced Breast Cancer Module available in 2026

- ACS LION credential continuing education courses and certificate opportunities are included in the initial cost of the ACS LION training and credentialing program.
- There is no supplementary proctored assessment required for the ACS LION Credential continuing education training courses, certificate opportunities, or for maintaining the ACS LION credential within the three-year period. However, knowledge assessments and scenario analysis are conducted following the completion of each course.

Who is this program for?
The ACS LION training and credentialing program is designed for any individual or organization seeking recognition for providing professional non-clinical navigation activities aligned to CMS competencies and Oncology Navigation Standards of Professional Practice including but not limited to:

- Patient Navigator/Oncology Patient Navigator
- Professional Non-clinical Navigator
- Social Worker
- Nurse Navigator
- Community Health Worker

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- Promotores/Promotoras de salud
- Financial Navigator
- Clinical Trial Navigator
- Patient Care Coordinator
- Registered Nurse
- Licensed Practical Nurse

The focus on identifying the program's audience is not based solely on a team member's title. Instead, we suggest that when assessing who should participate in this program, greater attention should be given to those involved in the non-clinical navigation activities of your team.

What are the learner eligibility requirements for this program?
The person enrolling in the ACS LION program must be at least 18 years old and reside in the United States. There are no academic, license, or title prerequisites for the program.

How does an individual become ACS LION credentialed?
To earn the ACS LION credential, learners must:
- Complete all ten (10) modules in the ACS LION Mastery training program
- Complete all quizzes with a score of at least 80%
- Complete the program assessment with a score of at least 80%
- Complete all the above requirements within ninety (90) days of enrolling in the program

What is covered in the ACS LION Mastery training?
The 10 training modules are:
1. Navigation Basics
2. Cancer Basics
3. Person-centered Assessments
4. Health System Services Access and Coordination
5. Community-based Services Access and Coordination
6. Community Assessment
7. Patient and Family Communication
8. Promoting Patient Self-Advocacy
9. Facilitation of Person-centered Support
10. Professionalism and Ethical Conduct

- Training modules incorporate a variety of interactive learning tools, including videos, matching activities, and flip cards. Each module concludes with a quiz to assess comprehension.

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- Modules and quizzes do not have to be completed in one sitting; progress will be saved.

How is the ACS LION Mastery training and credentialing program administered?
- The ACS LION Mastery Training is delivered entirely online and is self-paced, except for the final program assessment.
- The final assessment must be completed within a 120-minute time limit.
- There is no in-person requirement or option for either the training or the assessment.
- All components must be completed on a desktop or laptop computer. Tablets and mobile devices are not supported.
- Each module includes a quiz that must be completed.
- Learners may complete modules and quizzes at their own pace; progress is saved automatically.
- After passing all modules and quizzes, learners must complete a final, remotely proctored assessment.
- The final assessment must be completed in one sitting, requires a desktop or laptop with a webcam and microphone, and is a live, proctored exam designed to validate competency.
- More information on the technology requirement and what learners can expect within the online proctoring process are available here: [What to Expect on Exam Day](#)

How long do learners have to complete the ACS LION Mastery training program?
- Learners must successfully complete the initial training through the ACS LION Mastery program (including the final program assessment) within 90 days of enrollment, or their enrollment will expire, and all fees will be forfeited.
- On average, it takes navigation professionals anywhere from 8-10 hours to complete the entire ACS LION Mastery training, depending on prior knowledge and experience. This does not include the final assessment.
- Learners can view the modules, overviews, and glossary resources as many times as they would like within that timeframe.

Does ACS offer accommodation for the training and final assessment?
ADA-approved accommodation is available. The steps for this are listed on the learning platform.

Can a learner print materials or study guides?
There is no formal study guide for the ACS LION course as each learner has access to the modules for the 90-day enrollment. That said, each module has a content overview page and a glossary for terminology review before the final assessment.

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Does a learner need special equipment to complete this online training and credentialing program?
- To complete all ACS LION program requirements, learners must use a desktop or laptop computer. Tablets and cell phones are not supported within the training modules or the final assessment.
- The final assessment includes remote proctoring and requires a working microphone and camera.
- We strongly recommend using a personal desktop or laptop (rather than a work computer), as work devices may have strict security settings or firewalls that interfere with proctoring.

Remote Proctoring Considerations
- ACS partners with an external remote proctoring vendor, ProctorU. Any technical issues with the proctoring process will need to be first addressed with ProctorU.
- Please test your equipment before your exam by logging into your ProctorU account. Test your equipment prior to your exam within your ProctorU account or you can use this link.
- If you encounter any issues, please use the live chat feature in your ProctorU account to get assistance for testing as well as before your exam. This is ProctorU's preferred method of communication.
- Remote control software (e.g., TeamViewer, GoToMyPC, AnyDesk) must be fully closed. These applications are not permitted during testing.
- Apple Boot Camp is not supported for testing.
- Unlicensed or inactive versions of Windows, as well as test builds or developer modes, are not permitted.
- Only one monitor can be used during your time. All additional monitors must be disconnected, not just turned off.
- If you're using an external monitor with a closed laptop, ensure the display is set to "mirror" mode and that the monitor is connected directly to the laptop (not through a docking station).
- Headphones are generally not allowed. You must have ADA accommodation for any hearing or headset devices.
- Proctors cannot access your computer files without your knowledge. Everything they do will be shown on your screen, and they cannot perform "hidden" actions. Access to your computer is only granted with your explicit permission and after you've clicked a button to confirm.
- Proctors have the ability to view the screen and utilize the mouse and keyboard as if they were sitting next to you. Once the exam starts, your proctor will monitor everything on the computer screen but can no longer utilize your mouse and keyboard.
- During the entire process, a chat box is running on your computer, and you can see what permissions the proctor currently has at any time. The entire chat session log is saved, including a permanent record of what actions the proctor took while accessing your computer.
- If you need support using the ProctorU platform, the ProctorU website has support on getting started, troubleshooting, scheduling, and equipment requirements, ProctorU Support Link.

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Do learners need to take the training in a specific order, and are there test-out options for known content?
- The training is structured sequentially, and learners must complete each lesson to unlock the next lesson within each module.
- Learners must complete each module and module quiz to unlock the next module.
- To ensure standardized training instruction, there is no test-out option on any of the training modules.

What credential is earned once a learner completes the training and has a successful assessment?
Learners who successfully complete the program (including the program assessment) will receive the ACS LION credential (badge and printable certificate of completion).

When does the ACS LION credential expire?
Once credentialed, learners will need to re-credential every three years in addition to annual professional development content to maintain an active ACS LION credential status.

Does this training and credentialing program offer continuing education hours or credits?
We are pursuing accreditation and the ability to offer CEs. In the meantime, the ACS LION training complies with the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC) accreditation navigation training hours.

Is the ACS LION program specific to oncology navigation, or does it include general patient navigation as well?
The program meets the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) training requirements for Principal Illness Navigation (PIN) reimbursement and is aligned with Oncology Navigation Standards of Professional Practice for navigation activities. This program is open to anyone seeking training in patient navigation. While the curriculum focuses on cancer as the primary disease site, many of the navigation skills and activities taught are broadly applicable to other serious illnesses. Please note that the additional professional development certificates are specific to cancer navigation within landscapes such as Clinical Trials and Supportive Palliative Care.

Cost Overview:
How much does the program and/or exam cost?
- The cost for individual enrollment access in the ACS LION program is $495.

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- Enrollment provides each learner with access to the ACS LION Mastery training and credentialing program and up to two (2) attempts to take the program assessment.
- This cost also includes ACS LION continued education professional development courses for the two years for the two following years of the three-year credential.
- Given our strong commitment to navigation, all revenue generated from the program will be re-invested into ACS' navigation portfolio.

Are there any scholarships or discounts available to cover the cost of training and credentialing?
- Access assistance for the training and credentialing program is available through the Leadership in Oncology Navigation Equity Support (ACS LION-ES) program. Our goal is to reduce financial barriers to the ACS LION program by offering enrollment to a limited number of individuals at no charge. There are various timeframes throughout the year for application requests.
- More information, eligibility requirements, and a link to the application form are available on our website, www.cancer.org/lion
- We also offer a 10% discount to organizations with 50+ learners enrolled. Please contact us at ACSLION@cancer.org for more information on this opportunity.

Can I get a refund for the program?
Enrollment in the program is non-refundable and non-transferable and must be completed within 90 days. This timeline includes the successful completion of the final proctored assessment

Guidance and Support Resources:

What additional support does ACS LION offer outside of the training and credentialing program?
ACS LION goes beyond coursework by offering a robust suite of webinars, toolkits, and resources to support continuous learning and strategic implementation. These offerings are designed to help individuals and organizations stay informed, connected and empowered with the latest standards, innovations, and policy development in oncology navigation.

Where can we find more information on support programs and webinars?
Please visit our website, www.cancer.org/lion for a variety of resources to help oncology programs build effective and efficient professional navigation services.

Where can we find more information on cancer navigation through Principal Illness Navigation reimbursement?
To learn more, please review the "Updated Professional Navigation Payment FAQ" document on our website.

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How Is ACS Helping to Elevate and Expand Professional Navigation?

ACS will use our voice and credibility as the leading cancer non-profit and early champion of patient navigation to create and launch scalable navigation efforts through training and credentialing, implementation support, and capacity building.

ACS LION includes a standardized training and credentialing program that helps navigators provide essential services to individuals, caregivers, and families experiencing cancer. The program meets the CMS training requirements for PIN reimbursement and is aligned with Oncology Navigation Standards of Professional Practice.

In addition to training and credentialing, ACS will continue to serve as a national convener of stakeholders interested in the implementation, evaluation, and sustainability of patient navigation. We offer a variety of resources to help oncology providers build effective and efficient professional navigation services.

For more information, go to www.cancer.org/lion