

# Integration of Palliative Care within Advanced Practice Education and Practice

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## BACKGROUND

- Palliative care focuses on improving quality of life and survival outcomes through collaborative communication, symptom management, and supporting patients and family with serious illnesses.
- Availability of primary palliative care has lagged behind patient needs due to insufficient training.
- Advanced practice nurses are well-positioned to meet the palliative care needs of seriously ill persons across the lifespan across settings.

## AIM

- This educational research program is focused to integrate palliative care throughout advanced practice curricula and accelerate palliative care competencies among Advanced Practice-Doctor of Nursing Practice (AP-DNP) graduates.

## METHODS

- Our strategy consisted of two goals:
  - Create academic-clinical partnerships to increase AP-DNP students' access to high-quality palliative care sites by providing clinicians and preceptors in all practice settings access to training in palliative care;
  - Promote AP-DNP graduates' readiness to provide comprehensive palliative care to patients by integrating palliative care content into AP-DNP curricula through didactic content, co-simulations, interprofessional education, and clinical experiences with a variety of patient populations.
- To evaluate the program's impact, the Palliative Care Quiz for Nursing (PCQN)<sup>1</sup> for palliative care knowledge and the Palliative Care Self-efficacy (PCSE)<sup>2</sup> scale for confidence in providing palliative care services were administered to AP-DNP students, clinicians, preceptors and faculty.

## RESULTS

- Student sample size (n) =51
- The preliminary data suggest improvement in palliative care self-efficacy among faculty and preceptors.
- Students' baseline average (SD) score for PCQN was 12.2 (3.95) and PCSE was 32.7 (9.40).
- Lessons learned in year one and two include the need for a strategic approach to collaborate with practice partners, preplanning, and contingency plans.
- A policy imperative, rich resources and networks are available to fuel the agenda, but resources need to be valued and effectively utilized within the academic program.

**Table 1: Student Characteristics, Palliative Care Knowledge and Competencies**

Characteristics	mean ± SD/ n (%)
Age	31.0 ± 5.67 years
Female	50 (98.0)
Race	
Caucasian	30 (58.8)
African American/Black	2 (3.9)
Asian	17 (33.3)
Hispanic/Latino	8 (15.7)
Native American	2 (3.9)
Native Hawaiian	1 (2.0)
Highest level of education	
BS/BSN	32 (62.7)
MS/MA/MPH	18 (35.3)
Doctoral	1 (2.0)
Palliative Care Knowledge	12.2 ± 3.95
Palliative Care Confidence	32.7 ± 9.40

## CONCLUSION

**As the country grapples with a growing aging population and a longer lifespan of pediatric population with serious illnesses, the work of developing palliative care capacity among advanced practice nurses is critically important.**

## REFERENCES

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