

Accelerating Advanced Practice Palliative Care Competencies

Binu Koirala, PhD, MGS, RN¹, Sharon Kozachik, PhD, MSN, RN, FAAN¹, Cheryl Dennison Himmelfarb, PhD, ANP, RN, FAAN¹

¹JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF NURSING, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

BACKGROUND

- Palliative care is an interdisciplinary modality that improves communication, symptom control, and support for patients and their families; it results in improved quality of life and survival outcomes and decreased healthcare costs (Siouta et al., 2016; Swami & Case, 2018)
- Palliative care is a requisite but often unmet competency for Advance Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs)
- We proposed an innovative model for palliative care training of APRNs that is grounded in sound educational principles, and responsive to patient needs and our contemporary health environment

PURPOSE

- The project aims to integrate palliative care content throughout the advanced practice nursing curricula and accelerate palliative care competencies among Advanced Practice-Doctor of Nursing Practice (AP-DNP) graduates

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- To increase the didactic and clinical training in palliative care for APRN students, the two components of this educational research project include:
 - Integrating palliative care content into curricula for AP-DNP students through didactic, simulation, interprofessional, and clinical learning experiences
 - Providing access to palliative care training for clinicians and clinical preceptors in all practice settings through workshops and continuing professional education

METHODS

To evaluate the progress and inform the process, we collected and examined baseline data from newly matriculated AP-DNP students, prior to initiating clinical courses. We also collected pre- and post- data from AP-DNP faculty and preceptors who attended the workshop, "Integrating Palliative Care into APRN Practice and Training: What should you know?" conducted on June 14, 2018

- **Instruments:** Palliative care knowledge was measured using the Palliative Care Quiz for Nursing (scores range 0 – 20) (Ross, McDonald, & McGuinness, 1996). Palliative care confidence was measured using the Palliative Care Self-Efficacy Scale (scores range 12 – 48) (Phillips, Salamonson, & Davidson, 2011)
- **Data analysis:** Data were analyzed using SPSS. We calculated descriptive statistics on sociodemographic variables and conducted a dependent samples t-test to determine whether workshop attendance improved scores for palliative care knowledge and confidence among the attendees.

RESULTS

Table 1: AP-DNP Students (n=21)

Characteristics	mean ± SD/ n (%)
Age	30.9 ± 5.01 years
Female	21 (100.0)
Race	
Caucasian	11 (52.4)
Asian	8 (38.1)
Hispanic/Latino	4 (19.0)
Native American	1 (4.8)
Native Hawaiian	1 (4.8)
Highest level of education	
BS/BSN	14 (66.7)
MS/MA/MPH	6 (28.6)
Doctoral	1 (4.8)

Table 2: AP-DNP Faculty and Preceptors (n=20)

Characteristics	mean ± SD/ n (%)
Age	43.9 ± 13.25 years
Female	20 (100)
Highest level of education	
BSN	1 (5.0)
MSN	10 (50.0)
MPH	1 (5.0)
PhD	5 (25.0)
DNP	2 (10.0)
Experience working as a	
Advanced Practice Nurse (n=14)	17.8 ± 11.78 years
Preceptor/Clinical Instructor (n=16)	15.8 ± 12.28 years
Faculty (n=8)	12.9 ± 10.91 years

Table 3: Palliative Care Knowledge and Competencies

	Students (Baseline) (mean ± SD)	Faculty and Preceptors		P
		Pre-test (mean ± SD)	Post-test (mean ± SD)	
Palliative Care Knowledge	12.0 ± 3.91	14.2 ± 3.29	14.7 ± 3.10	.903
Palliative Care Confidence	33.7 ± 10.45	31.5 ± 11.49	36.2 ± 10.36	<.01

CONCLUSION

- Workshop attendance resulted in a significant increase in Palliative Care Confidence scores (p < .01) among the AP-DNP faculty and preceptors, but did not significantly improve Palliative Care Knowledge scores.
- By integrating palliative care content in AP-DNP curriculum, we expect to increase palliative care knowledge and confidence in students and prepare AP-DNPs with essential palliative care competencies
- There is a pressing need from local to global levels to increase the number of APRNs with palliative care competencies

REFERENCES

- Phillips, J., Salamonson, Y., & Davidson, P. M. (2011). An instrument to assess nurses' and care assistants' self-efficacy to provide a palliative approach to older people in residential aged care: A validation study. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 48(9), 1096-1100.
- Ross, M. M., McDonald, B., & McGuinness, J. (1996). The palliative care quiz for nursing (PCQN): the development of an instrument to measure nurses' knowledge of palliative care. *J Adv Nurs*, 23(1), 126-137.
- Siouta, N., Van Beek, K., van der Eerden, M. E., Preston, N., Hasselaar, J. G., Hughes, S., . . . Menten, J. (2016). Integrated palliative care in Europe: a qualitative systematic literature review of empirically-tested models in cancer and chronic disease. *BMC Palliat Care*, 15, 56. doi:10.1186/s12904-016-0130-7
- Swami, M., & Case, A. A. (2018). Effective Palliative Care: What Is Involved? *Oncology (Williston Park)*, 32(4), 180-184.

FUNDING

Research reported in this presentation is supported by: Accelerating Advanced Practice Palliative Care Competencies and Expanding Practice Partnerships (Maryland Higher Education Commission Grant # NSPII18-113)