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## Effectiveness of a perinatal and pediatric end-of-life nursing education consortium (ELNEC) curricula integration

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**Background:** Educational practices and national guidelines for best practices of providing palliative care to children and their families have been developed and are gaining support; however, the dissemination of those practices lags behind expectations. Incorporating education for pediatric palliative care into nursing pre-licensure programs will provide guidelines for best practices with opportunities to enact them prior to graduation.

**Objective:** To evaluate the effect of an integrated curriculum for palliative care on nursing students' knowledge.

**Design:** Matched pretest–posttest.

**Setting:** One private and one public university in the northeastern United States.

**Participants:** Two groups of baccalaureate nursing students, one exposed to an integrated curriculum for palliative care and one without the same exposure.

**Methods:** Pre-testing of the students with a 50-item multiple choice instrument prior to curriculum integration and post-testing with the same instrument at the end of the term.

**Results:** This analysis demonstrated changes in knowledge scores among the experimental ( $n = 40$ ) and control ( $n = 19$ ) groups that were statistically significant by time (Wilks' Lambda = .90,  $F(1, 57) = 6.70$ ,  $p = .012$ ) and study group (Wilks' Lambda = .83,  $F(1, 57) = 11.79$ ,  $p = .001$ ).

**Conclusions:** An integrated curriculum for pediatric and perinatal palliative and end-of-life care can demonstrate an increased knowledge in a small convenience sample of pre-licensure baccalaureate nursing students when compared to a control group not exposed to the same curriculum. Future research can examine the effect on graduates' satisfaction with program preparation for this specialty area; the role of the use of the curriculum with practice-partners to strengthen transfer of knowledge to the clinical environment; and the use of this curriculum inter professionally.

### Biography

Arthur J Engler completed his PhD in nursing in 1999 at the Catholic University of America in Washington DC. He has been on the faculty of the University Of Connecticut School Of Nursing in the U.S. since that time. He is the coordinator of the undergraduate pediatric nursing program and the author of numerous papers on pediatric and neonatal nursing.

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