



ELNEC Celebrates 20 Years of Advancing Excellence in Palliative Nursing

WASHINGTON, D.C., February 14, 2019 – The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) is proud to recognize the End-of Life Nursing Education Consortium (ELNEC) on its 20th anniversary as the world's leading nursing education initiative focused on improving the care of patients with serious illness and their families. ELNEC was launched in 1999 with initial funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation as a faculty development initiative designed to improve palliative care. Since its inception, this model academic-practice partnership between AACN and the City of Hope (Duarte, CA) has reached nurse educators in all 50 states and 99 countries around the world.

“Nurses spend more time assessing and caring for patients with serious illness than any other healthcare professional and, therefore, must be well-educated to provide care to individuals at their most vulnerable time,” said Ann Cary, PhD, MPH, RN, FNAP, FAAN, Chair of the AACN Board of Directors. “We are grateful to partner with City of Hope on the ELNEC project to provide this education and improve the quality of care available to patients and their families.”

Since ELNEC was launched, more than 24,000 nurses serving as clinicians, administrators, educators, and researchers have attended one of 230 national/international ELNEC train-the-trainer courses. Following these training sessions, participants have returned to their home institutions and presented the ELNEC content to over 726,000 nurses and other healthcare providers worldwide. This project continues to thrive after 20 years thanks to contributions from 13 foundations, organizations, and government agencies that have provided funding for the development of various ELNEC curricula.

Nursing educator and researcher Betty Ferrell, PhD, MA, CHPN, FPCN, FAAN, has been the visionary leader of this project for the past 20 years. In 1999, research by Dr. Ferrell and her colleagues found that of the 50 leading textbooks used in US nursing schools, only 2% of the content had any relationship to end-of-life care. Additional research documented a concern by nurses in practice of the need for improved education on caring for patients with serious illness.

“Because of the important role nurses play in caring for the seriously ill, it was important that we focus on educating nursing faculty so they could teach the next generation of nurses,” said Dr. Ferrell. “This approach has been a key to the success of the ELNEC project. Today, we

recognize that people are living longer with serious illness(es), and as a nation, we have moved care upstream to begin accessing palliative care at the time of diagnosis of a serious illness.”

Key achievements of the ELNEC project include the creation of ELNEC-Undergraduate, an online curriculum that 330 schools of nursing have accessed since 2017 and over 21,000 students have completed. A similar curriculum is being developed for graduate nursing students. Several curricula are focused on clinical nurses, including ELNEC Core, ELNEC Pediatrics, ELNEC Geriatrics, ELNEC Advanced Practice Registered Nurses, and ELNEC Communication. Recently funded projects include education for Oncology Advanced Practice Registered Nurses supported by the National Cancer Institute and online education for all graduate and undergraduate nursing programs in the United States supported by the Cambia Foundation. Since 2014, ELNEC is also available online through RELIAS Learning at: <https://www.relias.com/product/elneec-training>.

For more information about the ELNEC project, visit www.aacnnursing.org/ELNEC. If you would like to send your congratulations to the ELNEC project team and/or have questions about this educational program, contact elnec@coh.org.

The City of Hope is an innovative biomedical research, treatment and educational institution located just outside of Los Angeles. Designated a Comprehensive Cancer Center by the National Cancer Institute, City of Hope is dedicated to the prevention and cure of cancer, HIV/AIDS, diabetes, and other life-threatening diseases. The Center's philosophy of Hope has inspired its health care experts to develop programs that focus on treating the whole person—their emotional, spiritual and social wellbeing—in addition to their physical care. It is this combination of patient-centered care, state-of-the-art treatment and groundbreaking research that has made City of Hope a leader in the fight against devastating diseases. www.cityofhope.org

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) is the voice for academic nursing representing more than 820 member schools of nursing with baccalaureate and graduate nursing programs at institutions nationwide. AACN works to establish quality standards for nursing education; assists schools in implementing those standards; influences the nursing profession to improve health care; and promotes public support for professional nursing education, research, and practice. www.aacnnursing.org.