



An Interprofessional Hospice Training Pilot Program for Allied Health Care Major Students

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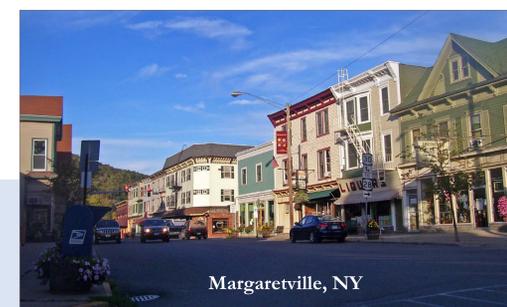
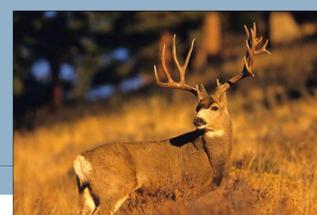


Background: Hospice and palliative care training and exposure are critical components within the curricula of allied health care education majors. Developing opportunities for students through community collaborations is necessary to address this need.

The purpose of this pilot initiative was to assess the feasibility of a formal program collaboration between an academic institution and a local hospice provider.

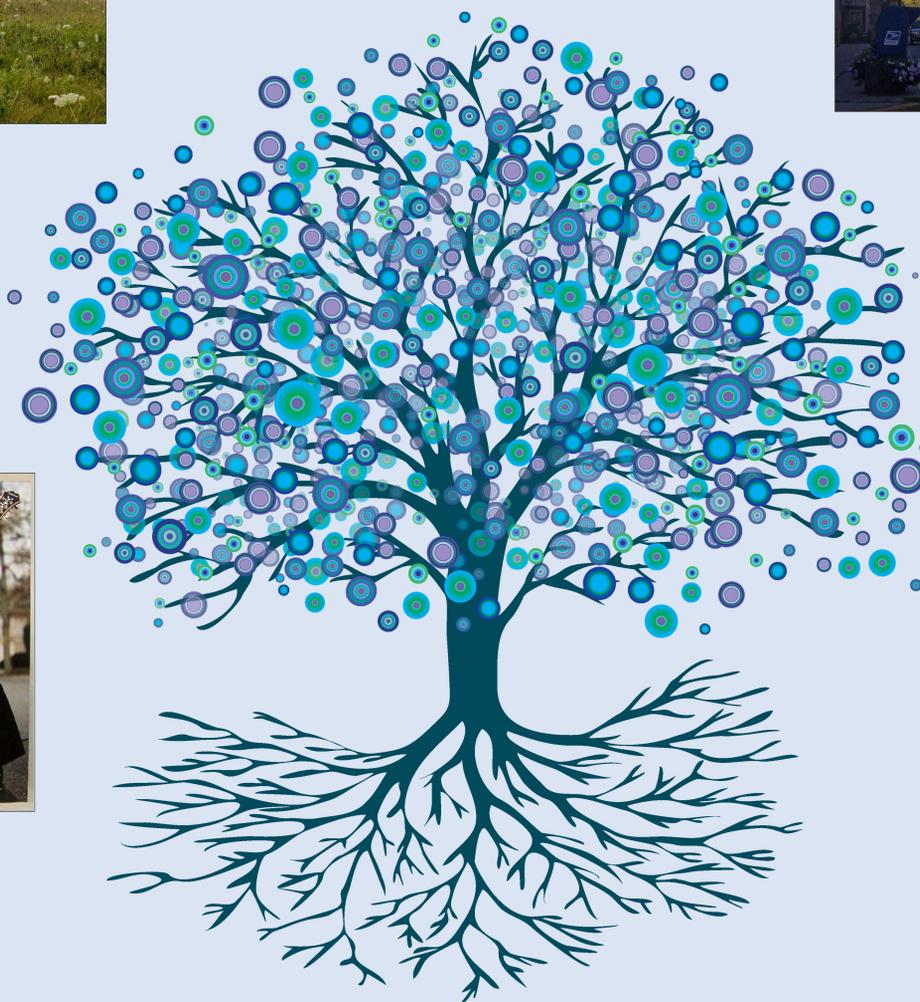


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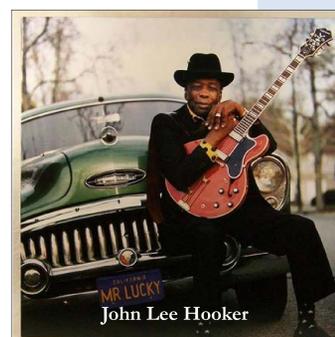


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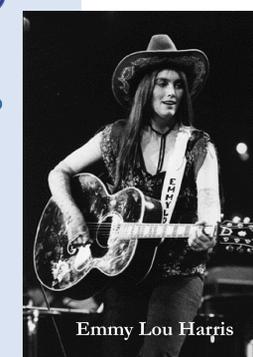
Results: Six student-mentor pairs worked with six patients receiving hospice for companionship and the creation and presentation of a Life Book. All pairs successfully completed the program and Life Books were presented to the patients at a final visit celebration. Four students completed both pre- and post-survey data. Comfort level working with patients on hospice increased following participation in the pilot program (2.5 to 3.75 on scale of 1 to 5).



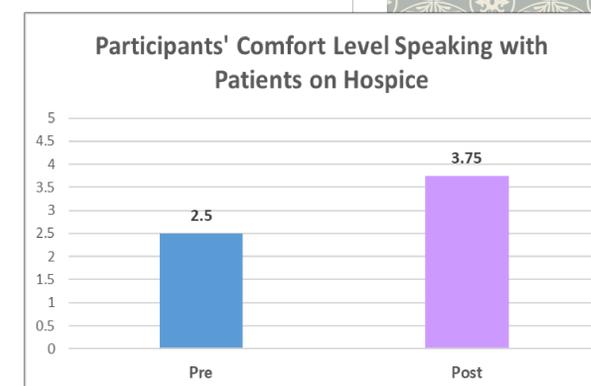
Pilot Program Participants



John Lee Hooker



Emmy Lou Harris



Methods: The University of New England partnered with Compassus Hospice for the “Celebrate Life” pilot program in spring, 2019. Evening trainings, with dinner provided, accommodated the students’ course schedules.

Six healthcare major students (physical therapy, occupational therapy and social work) completed formal hospice volunteer training and were matched with an experienced volunteer or faculty mentor to provide 6-8 companionship visits with a patient enrolled in hospice to develop a Life Book. Pre- and post-surveys were completed electronically to assess attitudes, motivations and comfort level for working with patients receiving hospice.



A 67 y.o. single male patient on hospice for advanced heart disease participated in the Celebrate Life Program. Raised in New York, he moved to the coast of Maine in his thirties. He was a mason and a clam digger, loved hunting, music and the Yankees. He died one month after participating.

Conclusion:

This project demonstrated the feasibility of a pilot program collaboration with positive outcomes observed for the participants. Experiential opportunities with virtual reality scenarios and observations in other hospice settings are being explored and utilized to further enhance the hospice training experience for students.

Acknowledgements: We would like to express appreciation to RS for sharing his life story and to Compassus Hospice for this rich learning opportunity.