Navigating the Pitfalls of DNP Projects Through an Academic and Practice Partnership

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Acknowledgements / Disclosures

• Shelley Thibeau, PhD, RNC-NIC,
  Senior RN Researcher, The Center for Nursing Research

• System Nursing Research Council Members
  – Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center
  – Southeastern Louisiana University
  – University of South Alabama, Mobile
  – Loyola University New Orleans
  – University of Alabama, Birmingham

• The presenters do not have any disclosures or conflicts of interest to report
Presentation Goals

• To share lessons learned from a 5-year collaborative among multiple universities and a large hospital system that fosters DNP projects that are aligned with agency strategic priorities

• This presentation will
  – Discuss a collaborative that facilitates intra- and inter-professional DNP projects to improve quality outcomes that transform healthcare
  – Cultivate a dynamic process that uses evaluation metrics to address ever changing pitfalls encountered by students, faculty, and the agency in facilitating DNP projects
Introduction

Participant Objectives

1. Discuss strategies to navigate 3 pitfalls of DNP project management experienced by students, faculty and agencies

2. Describe 3 of the 6 key elements assessed using the feasibility checklist during system nursing research council DNP project review

3. Recite at least 4 of the 7 criteria to evaluate the success of a practice and academic partnership model
Since 2006

Mission:
Serve the healthcare community by fostering the integration of research into quality healthcare outcomes through innovative education and training.

Vision:
We will conduct cutting-edge research which ignites a spirit of scientific inquiry in nurses at all levels, changing practice and changing lives. We will provide comprehensive research consultative and mentored services that will impact the scientific rigor of meaningful nursing research.

Strategic Priorities
- **People**: Grow our most valuable asset: nursing researchers
- **Quality**: Align our research priorities to measurable clinical outcomes
- **Loyalty**: Improve the research infrastructure to maintain and grow services
- **Stability**: Accelerate the growth of extramural research funding
- **Academic**: Become a recognized leader in nursing research and practice
- **Community**: Grow partnership commitments through research collaboration

Contact Information
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(504) 842-6193 krice@ochsner.org

[https://research.ochsner.org/nursing/](https://research.ochsner.org/nursing/)
Research Infrastructure at OHS

- Researcher Resources
- Center for Nursing Research
- Medical Librarians
- Epidemiologist
- Biostatisticians
- Grants Management
- Data Miners
- Medical Illustrations
- Medical Editing

Ochsner Health System

The Ochsner Journal

Ochsner Medical Library

REDCap

Measurement
System Nursing Research Council

Representatives from 6 facilities
AVP Advanced Practice Nurses
AVP System Nursing Prof Development
VP Academic Research

Dr. Marsha Bennett, DNS, APRN
Dr. Deborah Garbee, PhD, APRN

Dr. Luanne Billingsley, DNP, APRN
Dr. Janet Jones, DNS, APRN

Dr. Richard Ashmore, PhD
(retired, Rutgers)

Dr. Patricia Pearce, PhD, MPH, FNP
Dr. Jessica Peterson, PhD, BScN
Dr. Mary Oriol, DrPH, RN

Dr. Valorie Dearmon, DNP, RN

Dr. Linda Roussel, DSN, RN
System Nursing Research Council

- Faculty approved proposals reviewed
- Meetings 4\textsuperscript{th} Tuesday of each month
  - Proposal submitted week before
- Feasibility checklist
- Letter of support generated after approval
Pitfalls of DNP Projects

1. Ineffective communication of expectations
2. Project feasibility
3. Academic & agency regulatory requirements
Pitfall #1
Ineffective Communication

- Project expectations alignment
  - Student’s passion
  - Academic requirements
  - Agency strategic goals
Navigating Pitfall #1
Hardwiring Strategies to Improve Communication

• Meeting with student early to set expectations
  1. Orient to policies / approval processes
  2. Assess need for data use resources / agreement in supporting problem

• Student, faculty, agency conference
Pitfall #2
Project Feasibility

- Alignment with academic / agency goals
- Complexity of design
- Sufficient resources to complete
- Sustainability
Navigating Pitfall #2
Fostering Project Feasibility Through Alliances

- Engaging investigators & project leaders early
  - Setting expectations
  - Orientation to resources & toolkit
- Exploring stakeholders & potential mentor(s)
- Building academic alliances

http://www.equator-network.org/
Pitfall #3
Navigating Regulatory Requirements

• **Academic**
  – Human subject protection course
  – IRB approval(s)

• **Agency**
  – CITI course in human subject protection
  – Onsite project mentor
  – IRB approval
Navigating Pitfall #3
Using Individualized Toolkits

- **Instructions**
  - CITI course instructions
  - Requesting resources
    - Data miner
    - Biostatistician

- **Working templates**
  - Proposal & example
  - Presentation to SNRC
  - Feasibility checklist
Hardwiring Processes to Navigate Pitfalls of DNP Projects
Hardwiring Processes for Academic Projects

- **Pre-proposal development**
  - Student & faculty conference calls

- **Faculty approved proposal administratively authorized**

- **Proposal approval**
  - Student presents to SNRC using 10-item template

1. Title
2. Credentials
3. Problem
4. Evidence to support project
5. Purpose / Aim
6. Project description
7. Measures / Instruments
8. Data analysis plan
9. Project timeline
10. Human subject protection
System Nursing Research Council
Review Process

1. Project rigor
2. Financial considerations
3. Procedures & assessments
4. Accessible population
5. Documentation & data storage
6. Special considerations

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Ochsner Health System
System Nursing Research Council
Feasibility Checklist

Title of Study: ________________________________
Principal Investigator: __________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. General</td>
<td>a. Study meets mission of OCR and Nursing Research Council?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Study is congruent with NRC strategic goals?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>c. Sufficient evidence exists to support study?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>d. Problem is clearly articulated as a researchable question?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>e. Inclusion/exclusion criteria for subjects realistic?</td>
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<td>f. Statistician input in protocol/optimal sample size?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>g. Sufficiently detailed design and procedures to understand project process? (i.e. appropriate design, procedures, measures / instruments, analysis plan to address the purpose and research question(s)</td>
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<td>h. Projected timeline for study is realistic?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>i. Any foreseeable IRB/Human Subjects Protection issues?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>j. Principal investigator has demonstrated expertise to execute study or appropriate mentor identified?</td>
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<td>k. Appropriate administrative approval?</td>
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<td>l. Investigator and research assistants have completed CITI course?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>m. Investigator meets academic requirements if student project (i.e. clinical affiliation, health requirements, etc.)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Financial Considerations</td>
<td>a. Acceptable study budget?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Funding issues?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Procedures/Clinical Assessments</td>
<td>a. Procedures/Assessments complex?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>b. Additional staffing/specialist involvement required?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>c. Additional FTEs needed to complete project?</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Study Population</td>
<td>a. Clearly defined recruitment plan?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Recruitment plan complex?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Population: Adults/Minors/Vulnerable/Employees (circle one)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Case Report Forms/Reporting &amp; Documentation Requirements</td>
<td>a. Electronic or Paper? (circle one)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>b. Plan for data collection/forms acceptable?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>c. Plan for long-term storage (secured) of documentation?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>d. Transcription required for any component of the study?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Other Considerations</td>
<td>a. Complexity may interfere with completing the protocol?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>b. Sufficient staff/financial support to complete study timely?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>c. Extra storage or office space required to execute the study?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>d. Study requires departments outside of nursing?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>e. Will any study related procedures be completed as a part of nursing care? (i.e. increased nurses’ burden)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>f. Other hospital based committee approvals (other than IRB) are required to complete the study? (i.e. CDAN, etc.)</td>
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</table>
Navigating Pitfalls

Problem is strategic priority for organization?

Feasibility of DNP Project?

- Adequate data collection period
- Data analysis plan to address purpose/aim statement
- Human & financial resources to support project completion
- Sustainability plan post DNP project
- Feasibility of DNP Project?
Iowa Model

Figure O-2. Iowa Model of Evidence-Based Practice to Promote Quality Care

- Problem Focused Triggers:
  1. Risk Management Data
  2. Process Improvement Data
  3. Internal / External Benchmarking Data
  4. Financial Data
  5. Identification of Clinical Problem

- Knowledge Focused Triggers:
  1. New Research or Other Literature
  2. National Agencies or Organizational Standards and Guidelines
  3. Philosophies of Care
  4. Questions from Institutional Standards Committee

- Consider Other Triggers

- Is this Topic a Priority for the Organization?
  - Yes
    - Form a Team
  - No

- Assemble Relevant Research & Related Literature

- Critique & Synthesize Research for Use in Practice

- Is There a Sufficient Research Base?
  - Yes
    - Pilot the Change in Practice
      1. Select Outcomes to be Achieved
      2. Collect Baseline Data
      3. Design Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) Guidelines
      4. Implement EBP on Pilot Units
      5. Evaluate Process & Outcomes
      6. Modify the Practice Guidelines
    - Base Practice on Other Types of Evidence:
      1. Case Reports
      2. Expert Opinions
      3. Normative Principles
      4. Theory
  - No
    - Conduct Research

- Is Change Appropriate for Adoption in Practice?
  - Yes
    - Introduce the Change in Practice
  - No

- Monitor and Analyze Structure, Process, and Outcome Data
  - Staff
  - Care
  - Patient/Member

- Continues to Evaluate Quality of Care and New Knowledge

- Is the Change in Practice Working?
Navigating Pitfalls

- Problem is strategic priority for organization?
- Problem is measurable at the organization?
- Sufficient published evidence to support practice change vs. research initiative?
- Outcomes conceptually & operationally defined from literature?
- Reliable & valid measures and instruments?
- Ethical considerations?
- Adequate data collection period?
- Data analysis plan to address purpose/aim statement?
- Human & financial resources to support project completion?
- Sustainability plan post DNP project?
- Feasibility of DNP Project?
Organizational Measurement Resources

- Core measures
- Publicly reported internal quality metrics
- Internal quality registry data
- *Epic™* reports
  - Standard reports
  - Data miners
- Peer review publications by OHS
Navigating Pitfalls

- Problem is strategic priority for organization?
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- Human & financial resources to support project completion?
- Sustainability plan post DNP project?
- Feasibility of DNP Project?
# Understanding Scientific Evidence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Safety</th>
<th>Efficacy</th>
<th>Effectiveness</th>
<th>Comparative Effectiveness</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strength of relationship between variables</td>
<td>Risk, adverse events associated with variables</td>
<td>Capacity for beneficial change in clinical practice <strong>under ideal conditions</strong>; as good as other interventions</td>
<td>Capacity for beneficial change in clinical practice <strong>under ordinary conditions</strong>; as good as other interventions</td>
<td>Which intervention works best, poses greatest benefit &amp; harms for specific population &amp; setting</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Design</th>
<th>• Surveillance studies</th>
<th>• Observational studies</th>
<th>• RCT</th>
<th>• Cohort • Quasi-exp</th>
<th>• RCT • Matched pairs</th>
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</thead>
</table>
Navigating Pitfalls

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- Feasibility of DNP Project?
Operationalizing Outcome Measures

- Primary Outcomes
- Secondary Outcomes
- Adherence to practice change
Navigating Pitfalls

Problem is strategic priority for organization?

Problem is measureable at the organization?

Sufficient published evidence to support practice change vs. research initiative?

Outcomes conceptually & operationally defined from literature?

Reliable & valid measures and instruments?

Feasibility of DNP Project?

Adequate data collection period

Data analysis plan to address purpose /aim statement

Human & financial resources to support project completion

Sustainability plan post DNP project

Feasibility of DNP Project?
Practical Considerations in Selecting Patient-Reported Outcomes Measurement Instruments

1. Population
2. Burden
3. Cost & copyright
4. Mode & format of administration
Navigating Pitfalls

- Problem is strategic priority for organization?
- Problem is measureable at the organization?
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- Outcomes conceptually & operationally defined from literature?
- Reliable & valid measures and instruments?
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- Data analysis plan to address purpose/aim statement
- Human & financial resources to support project completion
- Sustainability plan post DNP project
- Feasibility of DNP Project?
Ethical Considerations

• CITI course for all study staff
• Assuring standard of care is not removed
• Competing projects
• Is informed consent required?
Navigating Pitfalls

Feasibility of DNP Project?

- Problem is strategic priority for organization?
- Problem is measureable at the organization?
- Sufficient published evidence to support practice change vs. research initiative?
- Outcomes conceptually & operationally defined from literature?
- Adequate data collection period?
- Ethical considerations?
- Reliable & valid measures and instruments?
Determining the Data Collection Period

- Depends on the project
- General guide for practice change (www.ihi.org)
  - As much data as possible in 3 months to direct process change
  - At least 12 months of data to determine true change in metric
  - 8 data points above or below goal to interpret as trend
  - 18 months to change culture
- Trial implementation may be best option
Navigating Pitfalls

Problem is strategic priority for organization?

Problem is measurable at the organization?

Sufficient published evidence to support practice change vs. research initiative?

Outcomes conceptually & operationally defined from literature?

Reliable & valid measures and instruments?

Ethical considerations?

Adequate data collection period?

Data analysis plan to address purpose/aim statement?

Feasibility of DNP Project?

Sustainability plan post DNP project?
Developing the Data Analyses Plan

• Correct test
  - Answer the clinical question
  - Meet statistical assumptions

• Agency resources
  - PhD Biostatistician
  - MPH Epidemiologist
  - 2 Nurse Scientists
Navigating Pitfalls

Feasibility of DNP Project?

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- Human & financial resources to support project completion?
- Sustainability plan post DNP project?
Agency Resources to Support Project Completion

• Determine realistic needs from start to finish

• OHS resources
  – Clinical ladder points
  – Volunteers
  – Guidance in identifying stakeholders and resources
  – Medical Editing
  – Medical Illustrations
Navigating Pitfalls

Feasibility of DNP Project?

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- Sustainability plan post DNP project?
Fostering Sustainability

Linked to Scientific Evidence

- Project Aim(s)
- Practice Change
  - Primary Endpoint
  - Secondary Endpoint
  - Confounders
- Outcomes
  - Operational Definition(s)
- Measurement & Instruments
- Data Collection & Analyses Plan
- Internal Validity of Findings

Ochsner Health System
Measuring Success

1. SNRC approval rate at 1st review
2. Student meets project assignment deadlines
3. Successful project implementation & completion
4. Dissemination
5. Sustainable project
6. Project generates clinical questions
7. Extramural funding
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Title</th>
<th>Date Approved by IRB (mm/dd/yy)</th>
<th>Study Status</th>
<th>Date Study Completed</th>
<th>Principal Investigator Name(s)</th>
<th>Principal Investigator Credentials</th>
<th>Role(s) of organization’s Nurse(s) in the Study</th>
<th>Partial Extramural Funding</th>
<th>Study Scope</th>
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<tr>
<td>Implementing the Cardiac Depression Scale on an Inpatient Cardiac Unit to Accurately Identify Depression in Adult Patients with Heart Failure: A Quality Improvement Project</td>
<td>3/14/2016</td>
<td>Open</td>
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<td>BSN, RN (DNP student)</td>
<td>Principal Investigator; study staff</td>
<td>OMC/NS</td>
<td>OMC/USA</td>
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<td>Trialing an Evidence-Based Guided Meditation Project to Reduce Perceived Stress in Emergency Department Nurses</td>
<td>4/22/2016</td>
<td>Open</td>
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<td>MSN, RN (DNP student)</td>
<td>Principal Investigator</td>
<td>OMC</td>
<td>OMC/SELU</td>
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<td>Feasibility of Implementing a Diabetes Distress Toolkit to Improve Outcomes in Adults with Uncontrolled Type 2 Diabetes: A Quality Improvement Project</td>
<td>2/4/2016</td>
<td>Open</td>
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<td>MN, ANP-C (DNP student)</td>
<td>Principal Investigator; study staff</td>
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<td>OMC/SELU</td>
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<td>Operationalizing a Just Culture Policy Using a Just Culture Decision Guide and Toolkit</td>
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**DISSEMINATION**

- Local - 5
- Regional - 3
- International - 1
- Publication - 2

**Study Scope**

- only one
- Multiple Organizations within a System
- Independent Organizations Collaboratively

**Check**

- OMC/NS
- OMC/USA
- OMC
- OMC/SELU
- OMC-NS
- OMC-NS/SELU

**Study Title**

- 8 DNP projects from 2011-2015

**Date Study Completed**

- 2016
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Study Title</th>
<th>Date Started</th>
<th>Date Completed</th>
<th>Study Scope</th>
<th>Principal Investigators</th>
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<td>Pain care quality and patient perception of pain care</td>
<td>4/3/2014</td>
<td>6/15/2015</td>
<td>Multiple Organizations within a System</td>
<td>MSN, RN (DNP student)</td>
<td>*STTI Int’l poster presentation</td>
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<td>Research assistants</td>
<td></td>
<td>*Regional podium presentation</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Principal &amp; Sub-Investigators; Research assistants</td>
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<td>*Practice change sustained</td>
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<td>*BITE Pain research study</td>
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<td>Effects of bi-weekly phone calls by APRN on improvement of A1C and self-efficacy in adults with type 2 diabetes on insulin with A1C &gt;7.5%</td>
<td>7/4/2014</td>
<td>8/10/2015</td>
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<td>*BITE Pain research study</td>
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<tr>
<td>A Clinical Nurse Specialist-Led Pilot Project to Implement an Evidence-Based Communication Bundle within an Inter-Professional Care Team</td>
<td>1/29/2015</td>
<td>1/28/2016</td>
<td>Multiple Organizations within a System</td>
<td>MSN, APRN, ACNS-BC, CCRN (DNP student)</td>
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Ochsner Health System

Transforming Healthcare
# Transforming Healthcare

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<tr>
<td>A Clinical Nurse Specialist-Led Pilot Project to Implement an Evidence-Based Communication Bundle within an Inter-Professional Care Team</td>
<td>1/29/2015</td>
<td>MSN, APRN, ACNS-BC, CCRN (DNP student)</td>
<td>Principal Investigator</td>
<td>Multiple Organizations within a System</td>
<td>Replication</td>
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(*Regional podium presentation*  
*Diabetes Distress research study*)
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<th>Study Title</th>
<th>Date Study Completed</th>
<th>Principal Investigator Name(s)</th>
<th>Role(s) of organization's Nurse(s) in the Study</th>
<th>Study Scope Check only one</th>
<th>Study Types Check all that apply</th>
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<td>Pain care quality and patient perception of pain care</td>
<td>6/15/2015</td>
<td>MSN, RN (DNP student)</td>
<td>Principal &amp; Sub-Investigators; Research assistants</td>
<td>OMC-NS</td>
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<td>Effects of bi-weekly phone calls by APRN on improvement of A1C and self-efficacy in adults with type 2 diabetes on insulin with A1C &gt; 7.5%</td>
<td>8/10/2015</td>
<td>Lori Lemoine</td>
<td>OMC</td>
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<td>A Clinical Nurse Specialist-Led Pilot Project to Implement an Evidence-Based Communication Bundle within an Inter-Professional Care Team</td>
<td>1/28/2016</td>
<td>Fiona Winterbottom</td>
<td>Principal Investigator</td>
<td>OMC</td>
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</table>
Conclusion

- This evolving 5-year dynamic partnership model engages academic partners to grow evidence-based project capacity, and aligns agency priorities that

*Changes Practice.....*  
*.....Changes Lives*
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• luanne.billingsley@selu.edu