

**Kimberly Chow**

## **Marketing and Branding Strategies for Palliative Care Nurse Champions**

### **Abstract**

**Background and Purpose:** The national shortage of palliative care specialists has led to the exploration of innovative care models that leverage the nurse-patient relationship to improve access to primary palliative care. Unfortunately, many nurses express a lack of skills, training, and self-efficacy in providing palliative care. Multi-faceted branding and marketing campaigns have been linked to improved self-efficacy, awareness, and positive behavior change in healthcare.

**Methods:** A pretest-posttest quality improvement project evaluated the effects of a nurse-champion-led branding and marketing intervention on medical oncology nurses' feelings of self-efficacy using the Self-Efficacy in Palliative Care (SEPC) scale. Participants received weekly e-mails, educational videos, and text messages from champions emphasizing one particular empathic communication framework. Pre and post-intervention scores were evaluated using a Wilcoxon Signed Rank test. Descriptive statistics were used to assess the feasibility of the intervention.

**Results:** Twelve medical oncology nurses participated in the quality improvement project. There was no significant difference in the pre and post-intervention SEPC scores for palliative care communication ( $p=0.612$ ), patient management ( $p=0.641$ ), or multidisciplinary teamwork ( $p=0.963$ ). There was overall low engagement with the six marketed videos, with 59% of participants watching 0-2 videos and 41% watching 3-6 videos. 87% of nurses utilized the communication framework at least once, with lack of time identified as a main barrier (67%). Support from nurse champions (50%), framework simplicity (42%), and weekly e-mails (42%) were the main facilitators of marketing content engagement and utilization.

**Conclusions:** Although results showed no significant difference between pre and post-intervention self-efficacy scores, median scores across all three subscales of palliative care were higher in the post-test surveys, indicating some level of improvement in self-efficacy for most participants and practical significance. The impact of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 on the healthcare system and its clinicians cannot be ignored and potentially played a role in nurses' ability to fully engage in and benefit from this project.

**Implications:** Marketing and branding strategies may be one approach to increase self-efficacy and promote the nurses' role in providing primary palliative care for their patients and should be explored further.

*Keywords:* palliative care, branding, marketing, nurses, Self-Efficacy in Palliative Care

