Reflective Statement

As the field of nursing continues to evolve, it will be increasingly necessary to possess a doctoral degree to influence change in healthcare. Through my matriculation at Emory, I have gained a wealth of knowledge with which I begin the next stages of my career. I continue to find inspiration for change among the most critically ill infants I see in practice and I am dedicated to improving palliative care for infants with life-limiting conditions.

Moving forward, my overall goals include the further development and dissemination of this DNP work. Foremost, I have begun efforts to establish an integrated palliative care team within the CHOA NICU. This effort has already gained the support of the unit director who also served as the clinical partner for this project. Plans are underway to present the findings of my project to a small interdisciplinary group who are themselves interested in advancing palliative care efforts. I intend to continue to push for palliative care guidelines and protocols in the NICU and will lead conversations to do so. I also plan to use the skills I obtained in Resolve Through Sharing bereavement training to provide education to NICU staff. Additionally, I hope to present the findings of this project at the upcoming joint conference of the Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association and American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine. While familiar with palliative care, this audience may have not explored its role in neonatology.

Over time, I hope to further collaborate with the pediatric palliative care team, potentially becoming a liaison for the NICU. Future research is also a goal, with potential topics being provider perceptions of palliative care, outcomes of implemented guidelines, and barriers to care within CHOA. Furthermore, I hope to replicate this study with multi-center analyses.