Hypothesis
• If NICU nurses feel empowered and are provided with the proper education and tools to further explore a certain topic, then their comfort level and the quality of care they perform will significantly increase.

Background
• Hillcrest Hospital is categorized as a level 3 Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. This means that they provide care to infants less than 32 weeks gestation and to those infants born with critical illnesses. A specific area in which they provide care is to extremely low birth weight infants. These infants require constant medical attention because they are in the most critical condition. They are infants that have a birth weight of less than 1000 grams and that are born around 27 weeks gestation.

Methodology
• Obtain copies of a survey given out in early 2016 regarding the nurses comfort levels when providing patient care
• Analyze and find a solution to improve results through nursing education, while focusing on the care for extremely low birth weight (ELBW) infants
• Study information and find research that pertains to nursing education and adult learning
• Compare and contrast active learning versus lectures to find the best way that nurses learn and obtain new information
• Create a learning booklet about caring for the ELBW babies with pictures and review questions to educate the nurses through the use of active learning
• Send out final booklets to NICU nurses and allow them time to read
• Create and send out a new survey to see if the nurses comfort levels in caring for an ELBW infant changed after being educated and empowered
• Compare the results from the old and the new surveys to see overall results

Data
• 76 NICU nurses surveyed, 31 responses (~41%)

Results
Active Learning Vs. Lectures:
• Active learning is an independent approach of learning by allowing students to engage in material through reading, writing, and hands-on activities. It is a strategy that lasts for only a few minutes at a time and requires students to think and process what they are learning.
• Lectures are classroom-based and led by an instructor. They last for a few hours and require students to listen, watch, and take notes on the new information.

Nurse Comfort Levels in Caring for ELBW Infants Prior to Reading the Booklet
- Feel Comfortable: 23%
- Do Not Feel Comfortable: 77%

On a scale of 1-5 (5 being the highest)
How helpful was the booklet?

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Nurse Comfort Levels in Caring for ELBW Infants After Reading the Booklet
- Comfort Level Increased: 3%
- Comfort Level Did Not Change: 97%

Conclusions
• Based on research and the results, teaching nurses using active learning is more effective than lectures as a learning technique in order for them to learn and retain new information. The learning booklet on ELBW infants demonstrated this type of learning and proved to be effective. Active learning engages nurses in their learning process allowing them to feel more confident about the care they will be providing. It also takes into account all of the adult learning principles so it will ensure that nurses are receiving the proper education they need to provide the best quality of care in the NICU.

Recommendations
• Based on the results, active learning should be incorporated more in all areas of nursing education.
• All NICU nurses should have the opportunity and be encouraged to care for all infants.
• More learning booklets should be created on different areas of care in the NICU based on what the nurses have requested in order to increase their knowledge and comfort levels in all areas of care.