

**Report on Implementation of the Knowledge, Skills, Training, Assessment and Research
(KSTAR) Pilot**

Summary of Request:

This agenda item is an action item intended to update Board members regarding the implementation of the KSTAR Pilot Program and seek future direction.

Historical Perspective:

In October of 2013, the Board approved a two-year pilot program with Texas A & M Health Sciences Center College of Nursing and the Rural and Community Health Institute to offer the KSTAR program for nurses with practice violations that result in a disciplinary sanction of a warning and below. KSTAR is the acronym for Knowledge, Skills, Training, Assessment and Research, a comprehensive program that utilizes an individualized assessment of the nurse with practice breakdowns, to design a personalized remedial education plan aimed at correcting any knowledge deficits that may exist. Monitoring and follow-up are built into the program.

Current Perspective:

KSTAR and Board staff continue to meet weekly via teleconference to discuss implementation of the pilot. As of March 31, 2015, a total of eleven nurse-participants have enrolled in the KSTAR for nurses pilot program. Of those eleven, 8 nurse-participants have completed the two day individualized assessment and training component. One nurse-participant completed the KSTAR for nurses pilot program in February 2015. The pilot program has been evaluating approximately 4 nurse-participants each month with a goal of eight nurse-participants monthly. KSTAR staff will develop individualized remediation plans and submit a report to the Director of Enforcement. The next phase of the pilot for these participants is working the remediation plan online with weekly coaching calls from KSTAR staff.

On a March 4, 2015 conference call, Dr. Rob Steele presented information on the KSTAR for physicians program "Fitness for Duty" evaluation component and the current and evolving approach to cognitive screening. Jettie Eddleman, BSN, RN, Chief Operations Officer for the Rural & Health Institute, College of Medicine at the Texas A&M Health Science Center announced that RCHI is committed to expanding KSTAR for Nursing and will be offering the assessments in College Station in May and June. It was also announced that process mapping of the KSTAR for Nursing program would be initiated soon with a mindset for expansion to additional sites. Mention of expanding the assessments from 2 days to 3 days in length was made.

Following this conference call, Board staff were notified that the lead nurse researcher and Texas A&M School of Nursing faculty member, who had been with the KSTAR for Nursing Program since inception, would cease participation with the pilot program after May 31, 2015.

This unexpected departure paired with announcements indicating a shift in direction of the pilot project prompted Board staff to request a face to face meeting on March 25, 2015 with RCHI KSTAR for Nursing staff to discuss concerns related to the future of the pilot project. On March 27, 2015 Board staff issued a follow up summary letter to RCHI KSTAR for Nursing staff, Jettie Eddleman, BSN, RN and Robert Steele, MD with a request for responses to questions that remained unaddressed following the meeting (See Attachment "A"). Ms. Eddleman submitted a response on behalf of the RCHI College of Medicine, Texas A&M Health Science Center on April 7, 2015 that is included in Attachments "B" and "C" for consideration.

Pros: Continuation of the KSTAR for Nurses Pilot Program is an opportunity to determine the effectiveness of an innovative approach to discipline. Responses from the RCHI College of Medicine, Texas A&M Health Science Center indicate a plan to collaborate with and include nursing faculty from the Texas A&M College of Nursing to participate in the pilot.

Cons: The recent changes in the RCHI/Texas A&M College of Nursing KSTAR for Nursing Pilot Program administration, staff and project direction have led to concern regarding the continued inclusion and role of the Texas A&M College of Nursing in the KSTAR for Nursing Pilot.

Staff Recommendation:

Option 1: Move to approve continuation of the KSTAR for Nurses Pilot Program and offer additional nurses who meet inclusion criteria the option to participate in KSTAR as an alternative method of discipline.

Option 2: Move to direct Board staff to refrain from offering future KSTAR orders until Board staff are assured that the KSTAR for Nurses Pilot Program will be implemented in accordance with Board Rule 213.35.



Texas Board of Nursing

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Katherine A. Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN
Executive Director

March 27, 2015

Jettie Eddleman, BSN, RN
 Robert Steele, MD
 Rural & Community Health Institute
 College of Medicine, Texas A&M Health Science Center
 2700 Earl Rudder Freeway South, Suite 3000
 College Station, Texas 77845

Re: KSTAR Meeting Notes from March 25, 2015 and Follow-Up Questions

Dear Ms. Eddleman and Dr. Steele:

Thank you for meeting with Board Staff on March 25th to discuss the current status the KSTAR Nursing pilot program. The Board highly values the collaborative relationship it has enjoyed between Board Staff, the Texas A&M College of Nursing, and the Rural and Community Health Institute and the transparency and trust that has been integral to the success of the KSTAR for Nurses Pilot Program. The pilot program was initially established by rule following the October 2013 Board meeting and adopted to be effective July 30, 2014. Prior to the rule adoption and up to now, the program development was planned under the vision and leadership of Dr. Ann Utterback, PhD, RN. Dr. Utterback's role and the expertise provided from the Texas A&M College of Nursing have been reassuring constants. The news shared with Board staff on March 10th that Dr. Utterback and presumably the School of Nursing would be ending a formal association with RCHI and KSTAR nursing is concerning. Due to this and concerns about the stability of the project plans, Board staff will refrain from offering additional KSTAR orders to nurses until the Board has an opportunity to be apprised of the recent changes and offer direction.

The BON requests and requires assurance that the key elements of the program including but not limited to the cause mapping, standardized assessments testing, use of quality simulation and clinical narratives outlined in the process map be maintained. Board staff are also requesting assurance that the agreement to conduct research be met in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the KSTAR program for Nurses as compared to the current method of discipline for nurses with practice violations that result in a disciplinary sanction of a warning or below.

Several questions were asked by Board staff during the March 25th meeting. Below is a summary of the some questions, responses, and items requiring follow-up:

1. What will the future association between RCHI and the Texas A&M College of Nursing be with regard to KSTAR for Nursing? A response is requested. Staff noted that all the previous nursing expertise in competency assessment, remediation plan development,

Members of the Board

Kathleen Shipp, MSN, RN, FNP
 Lubbock, *President*

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Shelby Ellzey, BBA Midlothian	Monica Hamby, LVN Amarillo	Kathy Leader-Horn, LVN Granbury	Mary M. LeBeck, MSN, RN Weatherford	Josefina Lujan, PhD, RN El Paso	Beverly Jean Nutall, LVN Bryan

targeted competency training, coaching, and commitment to establish empirical research results were developed through staff in the College of Nursing.

2. Who are the team members and what are their respective roles? Ms. Eddleman will provide a current organizational chart and a list of staff who are working with the KSTAR for Nursing program with their roles and credentials. She commented that interviews conducted with KSTAR staff following a two-day KSTAR retreat indicated heavy staff workloads that necessitated recent changes including a transition to the College Station campus to ease the strain on the staff and facility resources available at the Round Rock campus. Dr. Steele highlighted the College Station site offers a state of the art simulation center in a more private setting that is free of charge to the KSTAR program.
3. Who will conduct the assessments, evaluate the results, oversee testing and simulation, perform coaching, write the reports and conduct the research? Ms. Eddleman will provide this information to Board staff. Ms. Eddleman mentioned she had not yet received formal notice of Dr. Utterback's pending departure from the project. She indicated that Susan Moreland, PhD, RN, would be sending a streamlined report for Board staff to review and offer input. Ms. Eddleman and Dr. Steele both provided assurance that the project would carry on as was initially planned despite staff turnover and emphasized the need for long-term planning for a sustainable future of KSTAR for Nursing. They both indicated that adding a committee approach to the evaluation process to allow collective decision making would mitigate a potential legal vulnerability of the program, given the high stakes involved in making recommendations regarding a nurse's ability to practice safely.
4. The research plan has been revised somewhat since the inception of KSTAR for Nursing. Who will author the revised research plan and submit it for IRB approval and when? A response to this item will be forthcoming.

Thank you again for taking the time to travel to meet with Board staff. We appreciate your efforts in keeping us informed of recent program changes and look forward to your responses to questions so that we may keep our Board updated and seek direction. We would like to invite you to attend the Board meeting which will be held on Thursday, April 16th, and Friday, April 17th, in the Hobby Building, Tower II, Room 225.

Sincerely,


Katherine A. Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN
Executive Director

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April 7, 2015

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RE: Response to Texas Board of Nursing's follow-up questions regarding the Texas Board of Nursing's Knowledge, Skills, Training and Research (KSTAR) Pilot Program

Dear Ms. Thomas:

Thank you and the Texas Board of Nursing (BON) for this opportunity to respond to your questions with factual information and reassurances regarding the current operational status, trust and future promise for the BON's Knowledge, Skills, Training, Assessment and Research (KSTAR) Pilot Program. Honoring all stakeholders collaborating in this pilot program, the Texas A&M University Health Science Center College of Medicine Rural and Community Health Institute (RCHI)'s (KSTAR) Nursing program and the Texas A&M Health Science Center College of Nursing (CON) currently collaborate to successfully implement the BON KSTAR Pilot program including adequate resources dedicated for operations, collaboration, planning, implementation and research for the Texas Board of Nursing KSTAR Pilot Program.

We appreciate and honor the rich developmental history that led to the October 2013, Board's authority under the Nursing Practice Act Sections 301.453(b) and 301.1605(a), for the Board to approve this innovative two-year pilot program for nurses, adopted in Board Rule 213.35 in July 2014.

Summary: Texas A&M University Health Science Center RCHI KSTAR Nursing Program, CON and the BON Knowledge, Skills, Training, Assessment and Research (KSTAR) Pilot Program:

The KSTAR Nursing Program is a mission from the vision of the Rural and Community Health Institute (RCHI) within the Texas A&M Health Science Center based on the RCHI KSTAR Physician Program that began in late 2007. The RCHI KSTAR Physician Program was innovatively designed to help physicians who want to re-enter practice, overcome practice issues or are under a medical board order. The sustainable RCHI KSTAR Physician Program has continued to grow and expand from 2007 to today. RCHI's executive leadership and quality and safety improvement leaders envisioned building on the core values and successful model



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of the KSTAR Physician Program to begin a program for helping Texas nurses, too. The early concept was very similar program to the KSTAR Physician Program.

For nursing as with physicians the nursing program requires clinically active professionals. While Texas A&M Health Science Center RCHI teams include licensed physicians, nurses and certified experts in quality improvement and patient safety methodologies, there was a recognized need and requirement to involve licensed clinically practicing nurses to provide the appropriate expertise when needed for evaluating nurses. Because it has always been the strategic mission for the Texas A&M Health Science Center to collaboratively work within the various colleges, the RCHI executive staff looked at this as a key opportunity to collaborate with the Texas A&M University Health Science Center College of Nursing (CON) in providing the clinical and educational expertise to this innovative program.

RCHI executive leadership and teams including recognized RCHI registered nurses including Kathy Mechler, Tammy Wagner, and Suzie Van, who collaborated and met with the Texas A&M CON Dean Sharon Wilkerson and faculty Ann Utterback and others periodically to develop a sustainable nursing assessment and remediation program. All teams involved met with the BON and the Texas Nurses Association (TNA) to receive support needed to continue work on this program. The BON toured the Texas A&M University Health Science Center College Station simulation center and became involved in assisting this group as needed in supporting the development of this program. Opportunities and challenges included collaboration for two unsuccessful attempts at securing grant funds to help seed the program; however, it was decided that RCHI would proceed in offering the assessments beginning for limited number of nurses if approved by the BON. The BON worked collaboratively with RCHI and the CON as they proceeded with the alpha/beta testing of the assessment modalities and after four long years of planning and strategizing, the pilot program was established by rule following the TBON October 2013 meeting and adopted to be effective July 30, 2014. The RCHI KSTAR program took the first nurse applicants December 2014 and has assessed 8 nurses through March 2015 with one nurse having completed the assessment/remediation process. Challenges have been met with adaptive guidance and oversight from RCHI, CON and BON to keep the BON Pilot Program viable and on track.

For example, team staffing has been challenging during the evolution of the RCHI KSTAR Nursing Program. The RCHI KSTAR Nursing program was initiated under the leadership of Kathy Mechler, former Co-Director, RCHI. Tammy Wagner, Suzie Van and Ann Utterback, who worked closely with Ms. Mechler on program design and marketing plans. Subsequently, Suzie Van moved from the RCHI KSTAR Nursing program to an RCHI Grant program per her request in 2013, though she continued to volunteer time for the RCHI KSTAR Nursing program. After



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an exhaustive search for a program manager that meets the educational and experience requirements necessary for the RCHI KSTAR Nursing program, Dr. Sue Moreland was hired in February 2014. Eventually in the Fall of 2014, Kathy Mechler retired from RCHI, and Suzie Van completed her Masters in Nursing Education as her eventual goal was to become a nurse educator, and was hired as faculty by the CON in late 2014. Ann Utterback, CON faculty and a foundational architect in the BON KSTAR Program Pilot has dedicated twenty percent of her faculty time through May 2015 to the BON KSTAR Program Pilot.

BON questions and RCHI responses:

1. What will the future association between RCHI and the Texas A&M College of Nursing be with regard to KSTAR for Nursing?

Texas A&M HSC RCHI has a very strong history of collaborating with the Texas A&M College of Nursing (CON) for this program and other RCHI programs. We pledge our intention to grow in collaboration with the CON and pursue opportunities with the CON and other various colleges within the HSC to strive for better health at better costs through many programs but specifically with the CON for the BON KSTAR Pilot Program. RCHI has worked with the CON faculty and students on various programs such as Nursing Peer Review, Capstone program and RCHI KSTAR Nursing since its inception. RCHI executive leadership serve and meet periodically with the CON. Most recently in March 2015 RCHI met with the CON to confirm collaborative commitments with RCHI KSTAR Nursing Program and the BON KSTAR Pilot Program and to remain collaborative respectful partners. This BON KSTAR Pilot Program collaboration, funding and partnering with CON faculty for clinical expertise as well as insights into the assessment and evaluation processes and planning.

2. Who are the team members and what are their respective roles?

Texas A&M College of Nursing (CON) Roles:

CON Dean Sharon Wilkerson serves with collaboration and on the Advisory Committee

CON faculty leaders and clinicians serve as part-time clinical expertise as well as insights into the assessment and evaluation processes and planning. The 2015 plan is to structure the role for more planned collaborative time limits to meet CON faculty needs. Collaboration includes planning research.

Texas A&M RCHI Roles: (See attached RCHI organizational chart.)

- Dr. Nancy Dickey, M.D., Executive Director
- Jettie Eddleman, BSN, RN, Director of Operations
- Dr. Robert Steele, MD, FAAFP, Director of Medical Quality and KSTAR Physician Program
- Tammy Wagner, BBA, RN, CPHQ, Director of Quality Improvement and Patient Safety



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- Sue Moreland, PhD, MSN, RN, KSTAR Nursing Program Coordinator
 - Tracy Adams BBA, Senior Administrative Coordinator, coordinates all assessment activities for the physical location per direction of RCHI KSTAR Nursing Program Coordinator. Tracy has been the KSTAR Physician coordinator for similar activities so her expertise is highly valued in our RCHI KSTAR Nursing program.
 - Charlotte Stephenson, Administrative Assistant, is being cross-trained to assist during times of high-volume or in absence of the Senior Administrative Coordinator.
 - Other Texas A&M HSC leaders and team members support all RCHI programs including the RCHI KSTAR programs.
- 3. Who will conduct the assessments, evaluate the results, oversee testing and simulation, perform coaching, write the reports and conduct the research?**
- Assessments are conducted by both CON faculty and RCHI KSTAR Nursing teams.
 - Prophecy computerized testing is organized by Dr. Sue Moreland, with modules selected according to the individual needs of the nurse participant. She has been trained extensively for this by our Prophecy representative.
 - Cause Mapping is conducted by Dr. Sue Moreland who been extensively trained in the Cause Mapping and Process Mapping, as well as and Root Cause Analysis investigation; all sound methodologies used with Quality and Patient Safety. In addition, other RCHI staff have also been trained in these methodologies.
 - Patient scenario simulations are conducted with the direction of CON Faculty with clinical expertise, using the Creighton Competency Evaluation Instrument (C-CEI©) and Debriefing Tool. In addition, Dr. Sue Moreland has completed the required training for the use of the Creighton Competency Evaluation Instrument and had received permission by the creators of the C-CEI© for use of this tool in the RCHI KSTAR Nursing program and associated research.
 - The “Clinical Narrative” is a document widely used to provide insight into an individual’s current clinical practice. The “Unpacking Tool” is one method of evaluation and was selected by Dr. Ann Utterback, Associate Professor, CON for use with the Clinical Narrative. However, the use of the Unpacking Tool will need to be reconsidered in the future as RCHI has been notified that permission to use this evaluation tool was granted solely to Dr. Utterback. While this is one method of Clinical Narratives, it is not the only method, and RCHI KSTAR Nursing will research other venues for Clinical Narrative analysis.
 - Evaluation of Results
 - Results are evaluated by a committee consisting of those that participated in assessments, as well as the Director of Quality Improvement and Patient Safety. Additional clinical expertise may be called in, as needed.



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- Testing and Simulation Oversight
 - Testing sites are proctored by video camera under the direction of RCHI KSTAR Nursing staff to include Dr. Sue Moreland and Tracy Adams.
 - Simulation oversight is provided by Dr. Sue Moreland as well as the CON faculty associated with the specific simulation.
 - Coaching
 - Provided by KSTAR Nursing staff and CON faculty
 - Report Writing
 - Report writing is a joint effort based on the discussion and analysis of assessment modalities through the evaluation committee. All reports have a committee consensus and are finalized prior to being signed by the RCHI KSTAR Nursing program Director or Coordinator.
 - The individual Education Plan is also agreed upon by committee consensus. Dr. Sue Moreland has had extensive orientation and training by ATI clinical integration specialists to assure ATI modules are selected based on gaps with Nurse of the Future (NOF) Nursing Core Competencies©.
- 4. The research plan has been revised somewhat since the inception of KSTAR for Nursing. Who will author the revised research plan and submit it for IRB approval and when?**
- RCHI is committed and currently collaborating for KSTAR Pilot Program research with the BON and CON. RCHI's Dr. Sue Moreland, Ph.D., MSN, RN, is currently administratively leading the planned revision preparing for KSTAR Pilot Program research collaborating with the CON and BON. Next steps are the new proposal due to the IRB by June 2015 as agreed through the weekly BON and RCHI weekly conference calls and visit with the CON Dean. It has been agreed that the IRB be postponed to June 2015 and research is a desired requirement and benefit for everyone in this program.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to these questions.

Respectfully,

Jettie Eddleman

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Director of Operations
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