



Quality Enhancement Plan Executive Summary
Frontier Nursing University
Enhancing Healthcare Team Communication: Safe and Effective Care for All

Frontier Nursing University's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is focused on improving interprofessional and intraprofessional communication and other teamwork skills in the healthcare environment by utilizing the TeamSTEPPS framework. Interdisciplinary education has been the focus of discussion at the Institute of Medicine for over 40 years. The IOM's vision focuses on the importance of all health professionals being educated to deliver patient-centered care as members of an interdisciplinary team, emphasizing evidence-based practice, quality improvement approaches, and informatics. Patient safety experts agree that communication and teamwork skills are essential for providing quality health care. When all clinical and nonclinical staff collaborate effectively, healthcare teams can improve patient outcomes, prevent medical errors, improve efficiency, and increase patient satisfaction. The importance of improving interprofessional and intraprofessional communication in healthcare teams has been a long-held goal of FNU leaders and faculty. During the strategic planning process in 2015, our broad-based stakeholder group involvement identified one university-level five-year goal as ensuring students learn to function in collaborative, interprofessional teams. After the strategic planning process, we began working to create and develop strategies to improve students' abilities to function in healthcare teams.

The vision of this QEP, improving communication and other teamwork skills in the healthcare environment utilizing the TeamSTEPPS framework, which stands for **T**eam **S**trategies and **T**ools to **E**nhance **P**erformance and **P**atient **S**afety, aims to broaden and enhance healthcare team communication and teamwork skills by focusing on four objectives.

- Demonstrate an understanding of Healthcare Team Communication
- Apply principles of Healthcare Team Leadership
- Recognize Healthcare Team Situation Monitoring
- Examine strategies for Healthcare Team Mutual Support

The QEP strives to maintain the focus on improving collaboration and communication in healthcare teams. Teamwork has been found to be one of the key initiatives within patient safety that can transform the culture within healthcare. Patient safety experts agree that communication and other teamwork skills are essential to the delivery of quality healthcare and to preventing and mitigating medical errors and patient injury and harm. Accordingly, TeamSTEPPS, experiences will focus on the care of the people we serve regardless of the student's educational setting. Educational activities will build on foundational information in order to allow students to apply their knowledge to solve problems and create team-based plans of care. Student learning outcomes will be based on nationally accepted competency domains to ensure that students truly learn how to practice in the healthcare team environment. The courses with integrated content will enhance student capabilities to utilize TeamSTEPPS and the assessment data will be measured institutionally to assure breadth and impact on student learning.

Frontier Nursing University is confident that our topic of enhancing healthcare team communication, using the established TeamSTEPPS framework, is grounded in our institutional planning process, well-supported by our constituents, and has the potential to significantly and positively affect our students' knowledge and skills as they enter the healthcare workforce.