

**The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center**  
**Executive Summary for Quality Enhancement Plan: Team FIRST**

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The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center's 2019 Quality Enhancement Plan is entitled "**Team FIRST.**" The name underscores the importance of teams in healthcare by implicitly accepting that humans can and will err, yet resilient teams can be highly reliable. Further, it emphasizes the primacy of team-based communication in providing highly reliable patient care. Since handovers are the ubiquitous teaming event in healthcare, the acronym "**FIRST**" points to the critical behaviors and conditions that must be present during handovers: 1. **Face-to-Face Feedback**, 2. **Inter-Professional and Interactive**, 3. **Reliable and Resilient**, 4. **Safe for Synthesis** and 5. **Team Training**.

**Team FIRST** provides a progressive series of inter-professional academic curricula designed to translate team-based communication during handovers into the clinical learning environment. By doing so, **Team FIRST** not only ensures student competencies in teamwork and communication but makes them active participants in the clinical transformation currently underway at UT Southwestern. Since many of our students will remain here as trainees, staff, and faculty, **Team FIRST** will help them become role models and local champions in our efforts to advance team-based care at our institution. For others, these experiences will help them influence similar clinical transformations occurring within the U.S. healthcare system.

**Team FIRST** is innovative in several dimensions. Primarily, it is driven *by, and for, students*. The Offices of Quality, Safety, and Outcomes Education in conjunction with Office of Undergraduate Education has already engaged over 20 students in scholarly activities related to team-based care during handovers. Second, **Team FIRST** provides opportunities for scholarly activity for both students and faculty by constructing teams comprised of students, faculty, human factors scientists, and mentors within each of the program's critical components. This ensures programs are acceptable, feasible, and hence likely to achieve widespread adoption locally and nationally. Third, **Team FIRST** integrates and applies the sciences of experiential learning, human factors, implementation, and safety to a common problem in healthcare. Successful execution of its objectives has the potential to produce national and international leaders in simulation-based education, patient safety, and quality improvement.

**Team FIRST** is an ambitious undertaking that leverages many of the existing and emerging programs at UT Southwestern. Whereas our previous QEP introduced inter-professional curriculum for our students, the Transitions in Training curriculum, recently launched for medical students, is providing us an "on-ramp" for interprofessional simulation-based team training for handovers. Faculty within our Academic Colleges, Health Professions and programs in Nursing and Pharmacy, at other institutions, already involved in inter-professional activities, will be used to support **Team FIRST**'s expanded curriculum. Most importantly, **Team FIRST** has the potential to create greater synergy between existing programs within Academic Affairs and the Health System's clinical learning environments.

Team-based communication and care coordination are central to reducing preventable harms and creating joy-in-work for medical teams. The inclusion of experts in organizational psychology and human factors in our proposal facilitates the adaptation of principles successfully used in other high-reliability industries, like aviation, to our healthcare system. Our focus on handovers provides the opportunity to teach and reinforce behaviors critical to teamwork, such as honesty, discipline, humility, curiosity, and creativity. These educational experiences will provide students with the skills and confidence needed to serve as change agents in efforts to reduce harms associated with communication failures. In summary, **Team FIRST** is a high-impact proposal, which challenges us to utilize the full capabilities of our academic medical center to develop innovative curriculum as well as students and faculty capable of accelerating the clinical transformation occurring within UT Southwestern and the world.