

Report on Implementation of the Knowledge, Skills, Training, Assessment and Research (KSTAR) Nursing Program

Summary of Request:

The purpose of this agenda item is informational only to update the Board on the implementation of the KSTAR Nursing Program.

Historical Perspective:

In October 2013, the Board approved a two-year pilot program with the Texas A&M Rural and Community Health Institute (ARCHI) and the College of Nursing (CON) to offer the KSTAR Nursing Pilot Program as an option to nurses with practice violations that result in a disciplinary sanction of a warning and below. KSTAR Nursing is 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.

The KSTAR Nursing Pilot Program enrolled its first cohort of nurses in November 2014. Feedback from this initial cohort of nurses was used to make necessary program improvements prior to formal research. In April 2015, the Board approved continuation of the KSTAR Nursing Pilot Program and directed Board Staff to continue to offer KSTAR as an alternative method of discipline to a maximum of four (4) nurses per month who meet inclusion criteria.

At the July 2015 quarterly Board meeting, Board Staff provided the Board with updates to the KSTAR Nursing Pilot Program leadership team including the addition of Debra Matthews, PhD, RN, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at Texas A&M CON and Dr. Susan Moreland, PhD, MSN, RN, KSTAR Nursing Program Manager, as well as plans to apply for approval to the Texas A&M University Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct the research aspect of the pilot. Following the July 2015 Board meeting, ARCHI established an agreement with the CON to ensure nursing faculty participate in the KSTAR Nursing assessments including simulation, individualized teaching plans, evaluations, and biweekly teleconferences with Board Staff to discuss participant progress and any program issues.

In October 2015, the Board approved a 2-year extension of the pilot to continue through October 2017. In January 2016, the Board approved Board Staff to offer a referral to the KSTAR Nursing program by agreed order to up to eight (8) nurses per month who meet eligibility criteria.

The KSTAR Nursing ARCHI, CON and BON team received approval from the Texas A&M Health Science Center IRB to conduct research to evaluate the effectiveness of the KSTAR program on November 17, 2015, the research cohort enrollment began in January 2016. In May 2017, the study was approved for continuing review through May 15, 2018. The KSTAR team at ARCHI has enrolled nurses in the research study through September 30, 2017.

At the July 2017 quarterly Board meeting, a summary of the research outcomes was presented and the Board approved KSTAR Nursing as a permanent disciplinary option for nurses meeting eligibility criteria as set out in [Board rule 213.35 relating to Targeted Assessment and Remediation Pilot Program](#). The KSTAR team at ARCHI committed to maintaining the current tuition, dedicated resources, collaborative partnership, and personnel, including CON faculty. Additionally, should any changes be made to the program, a formal request for Board approval would be required.

On August 31, 2018, Dr. Susan Moreland, PhD, MSN, RN, retired from her position as KSTAR Nursing Program Manager and Walter Page, MS, BSN, RN is now managing the KSTAR Nursing Program. The program continues to partner with the college of nursing to ensure nursing faculty are participating in the program.

At the October 2018 Board meeting, Board Staff reported that Staff from ARCHI, the CON and the Board presented a poster describing the KSTAR pilot study at the 2018 National Council of State Boards of Nursing Scientific Symposium in Chicago, IL on October 24, 2018. Board Staff also reported a summary provided by ARCHI of KSTAR Nursing Program participants' responses to program evaluation surveys that were overwhelmingly positive.

Following the October 2018 NCSBN Scientific Symposium, Tammy Wagner, BBA, RN, CPHQ, IQCI, Chief Nurse Officer and Director of Quality and Patient Safety for A&M Rural and Community Health Institute and Kristin Benton, DNP, RN, Director of Nursing, Texas Board of Nursing presented an overview of the KSTAR Nursing Program and Pilot Study to the Washington State Department of Health Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission at its January 11, 2019 Commission Meeting in Tumwater, WA. Ms. Wagner, Dr. Mathews and Dr. Benton presented to the Washington Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission and Washington area nurse educators by webinar on April 22, 2019. An article entitled, "Addressing Nursing Practice Breakdown: An Alternative Approach to Remediation" describing KSTAR nursing was published in the April 2019 issue of the *Journal of Nursing Regulation*.

Current Perspective:

As of December 18, 2019, 215 agreed Board orders for the KSTAR program have been ratified. Additionally:

- 208 nurses have enrolled or are in the process of enrolling in the KSTAR Nursing program;
 - 148 nurse participants have successfully completed the program;
 - 43 nurse participants are in the process of enrolling and completing the program;
 - 17 nurse participants were referred back to the Board for unsuccessful completion;and
- Seven nurses failed to enroll in the KSTAR Nursing program.

The KSTAR ARCHI, CON, and BON Team continues to meet regularly by conference call to review and discuss participant enrollments, progress, and evaluations. The KSTAR Nursing Program is currently able to accommodate up to six nurses at each remediation session.

The KSTAR ARCHI Team surveys nurse participants who have completed the program to solicit feedback regarding their perception of the program elements and effectiveness. As of

September 19, 2019, the KSTAR Nursing Program has surveyed 150 nurses and received 80 responses, for a 53% response rate. The responses reflect a positive perception of the program with an overall average ranked score of 3.7 on a Likert scale of 1 - 4, with 1 being least favorable and 4 being most favorable. Participants continue to offer constructive comments that have led to program improvements related to program and simulation orientation. Several comments highlighted the participants' appreciation for the support of their assigned nurse coach as well as other members of the KSTAR ARCHI Team.

A sampling of comments received from nurse participants who responded to the survey from September 2018 to September 2019 include:

- *All I can say is that the people who run this program are firm yet fair. They are very open and honest. They have empathy and understanding which goes a long ways. They are some of the finest people I've ever come across. Their coaching and feedback has made me a better professional and a better person. From the bottom of my heart, thank you KSTAR.*
- *I'm grateful for the program and the opportunity to return nurses to unrestricted practice. Because of the patient care circumstance that led me to KSTAR happening in 2013 I had already done some evaluation (cause mapping) regarding the events that caused the practice breakdown--however it was good to review it with other professionals. One or two days prior to my retesting I spoke with my coach. It was a good review.*
- *The simulation debriefing was thorough and the sim lab was set up well.*
- *I truly appreciate all your help and thank you very much for allowing the KSTAR program to be in existence. It has allowed me to continue my career and increase my knowledge base. I highly recommend the KSTAR program as alternative form of disciplinary action for nurses. Thank you and all the other KSTAR staff for your professionalism when conducting the assessments. I truly appreciate it.*
- *This is really a good program for nurses, which personally I really appreciate it. I could not think of anything that I suggest on what to improve because the program is design in a best way I can think of and I have the best coach Mr. Walter Page who really help me so much to understand the process of the program and helped me to finish in a timely manner. Thank you.*
- *Mr. Page was extremely helpful, very accessible, and supportive. Throughout this process, I felt that the KSTAR team and staff were truly interested in my individual success as a person and my educational success as a nurse. This program is difficult but very well structured to give the participant the best chance at success. I feel that this education will truly help me to be a better nurse. Thank you to everyone who helped me be successful through this program.*
- *I want to thank the KSTAR staff for their dedication and commitment to improving nurses' skills and knowledge across the state of Texas and I want to thank Texas A&M for pioneering and establishing such program for nurses. Even though disciplinary actions led me to enroll in KSTAR, its process did not feel at all punitive but rather educative; the one*

to one approach with concerned RNs allows for reflection and a chance for them to further elaborate the circumstances that led to the disciplinary actions, and also options to mitigate them. Special thanks to Walter for his kind and welcoming personality. He definitely eased up my stress level and made the KSTAR program feel like an opportunity to better my nursing knowledge and skills. GO AGGIES!

- *I appreciate all of the KSTAR staff and the clinical participant who was my patient in the home health care setting. Everyone at KSTAR was very helpful and friendly. I was anxious beforehand, and the first day of the jurisprudence and ethics class helped as a non-formal class prior to the next day that consisted of testing the entire day. Thank all of u. It was a privilege to be a part of this program.*
- *KSTAR program is extremely helpful and well organized. The instructors are knowledgeable and prompt with answering any/all questions. For myself there was a lot of anxiety and worry involved in the times leading up to attending the KSTAR program. I was very pleased and relieved that Walter Paige RN conducted a Q&A session first thing on day #1. I personally want you to know that being reported to the TXBON is scary, mentally difficult, it will make you question your career path and doubt abilities as a nurse. Perhaps the KSTAR program could offer a support system or resources to help those dealing with these same issues?*
- *I have no advice to offer on how to improve this program. The program was very well designed.*

Recommended Action: This is a non-action item for discussion purposes only.