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

Summary of Request:

This agenda item is an action item for the Board's consideration related to implementation of the KSTAR Pilot Program.

Historical Perspective:

In October 2013, the Board approved a two-year pilot program with Texas A&M Health Science Center Rural and Community Health Institute (RCHI) and the College of Nursing (CON) to offer the KSTAR program for nurses with practice violations that result in a disciplinary sanction of a warning and below. Knowledge, Skills, Training, Assessment and Research (KSTAR) 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.

In April 2015, Board Staff informed the Board of pilot leadership turnover at the Texas A&M Health Science Center RCHI and the CON that prompted a delay in program progress and concerns regarding the future of the pilot. Staff from RCHI presented a commitment to continuing the program and conducting research to evaluate the effectiveness of KSTAR Nursing with BON and CON faculty the April 2015 Board meeting. The Board approved continuation of the KSTAR Pilot Program and directed Board staff to continue to offer KSTAR as an alternative method of discipline to a maximum of four additional nurses per month who meet inclusion criteria.

At the July 2015 quarterly Board meeting, Board Staff provided the Board with updates to the pilot leadership team including the addition of Debra Matthews, PhD, RN, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the Texas A&M Health Science Center CON and Dr. Susan Moreland, MSN, PhD, RN, HACP, KSTAR Nursing Program Manager and plans to reapply for approval to the Texas A&M Health Science Center Institutional Review Board to conduct the research aspect of the pilot.

Since the July 2015 Board meeting, RCHI Staff shared with Board Staff that a contract has been established to secure CON faculty participation 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. Board Staff continue to meet biweekly via teleconference with the RCHI KSTAR team and now, CON faculty to discuss implementation of the pilot. These teleconferences provide for team discussion of pending Board referrals, nurse participant progress including review of assessment reports, individual education plans and final assessment reports. The KSTAR Nursing RCHI, CON and BON team submitted an application to the Texas A&M Health Science Center Institutional Review Board to

conduct research to evaluate the effectiveness of the KSTAR pilot in that was approved on November 17, 2015.

Current Perspective:

As of January 6, 2016, 36 agreed Board orders for the KSTAR program have been ratified. Additionally:

- Thirty two nurses have enrolled in the KSTAR Nursing program;
- Sixteen nurse participants have successfully completed the program;
- Twelve nurse participants are in the process of completing the program; and
- Five nurse participants were referred back to the Board.

The KSTAR Nursing pilot program team continues to meet by teleconference biweekly to discuss program progress, review progress reports, track pending referrals, and address any issues that arise. Until now, the Board Staff have referred up to four nurses per month to KSTAR Nursing. KSTAR Nursing RCHI Staff have indicated they have resources in place and are ready to enroll up to eight nurses per month. Based upon the current stability of the KSTAR Nursing Pilot Program, Board Staff are requesting the Board to consider approval to refer up to eight nurses per month to KSTAR Nursing.

Pros: Increasing the number of referrals to the KSTAR for Nurses Pilot Program from a maximum of four to eight nurses per month will assist to determine the effectiveness of an innovative approach to discipline. The KSTAR Nursing Pilot Program has been operating well with frequent communication among the RCHI, CON and BON Staff. Currently, Board Staff are assured the KSTAR for Nursing Pilot Program is being implemented in accordance with Board Rule 213.35.

Cons: The KSTAR Nursing Pilot Program effectiveness remains unknown.

Staff Recommendation: Move to direct Board Staff to offer up to eight KSTAR orders per month.