

## TeamSTEPPS™



TeamSTEPPS (Team Strategies and Tools to Enhance Performance and Patient Safety) is an evidence-based framework to optimize team performance across the healthcare delivery system.

The core of the TeamSTEPPS framework is comprised of four skills: **Leadership**, **Situation Monitoring**, **Mutual Support**, and **Communication**. These skills must interplay with the Team Competency Outcomes: **Knowledge**, **Attitudes**, and **Performance**.

### LEADERSHIP

There are two types of leaders: 1) Designated and 2) Situational. In effective teams, any member of the team with the skills to best manage the situation can assume the leadership role.

An effective team leader: organizes the team; articulates clear goals; makes decisions through collective input of members; empowers members to speak up and challenge, when appropriate; actively promotes and facilitates good teamwork; and skillfully resolves conflicts.

#### Team Events

- **Brief:** This is a short session for planning prior to start to discuss team formation; assign essential roles; establish expectations and climate; and anticipate outcomes and likely contingencies
- **Huddle:** When problem solving is needed, this ad hoc planning is used to reestablish situation awareness; reinforce plans already in place; and assess the need to adjust the plan.
- **Debrief:** This informal information exchange session is designed to improve team performance and effectiveness. Feedback from the team drives future process improvement.

### SITUATION MONITORING

**Situation monitoring** is the process of continually scanning and assessing what's going on around you to maintain situation awareness. (STEP = Status of the patient, Team members, Environment, Progress towards goal)

**Situation awareness** is "knowing what is going on around you" and knowing the conditions that affect your work.

**Shared mental models** result from each team member maintaining his or her situation awareness and sharing relevant facts with the entire team. Doing so helps ensure that everyone on the team is "on the same page."

**Cross Monitoring:** an error reduction strategy that involves monitoring actions of other team members; providing a safety net within the team; ensuring mistakes or oversights are caught quickly and easily; and "watching each other's back"

## MUTUAL SUPPORT

Task assistance is one form of mutual support in which team members:

- Protect each other from work overload situations
- Place all offers and requests for assistance in the context of patient safety
- Foster a climate where it is expected that assistance will be actively sought and offered

## COMMUNICATION

Effective communication is complete, clear, brief, and timely.

SBARQ is a technique for communicating critical information that requires immediate attention and action concerning a patient's condition and is especially important during handoff.

**Situation**—What is going on with the patient?  
**Background**—What is the clinical background or context?  
**Assessment**—What do I think the problem is?  
**Recommendation and Request**—What would I do to correct it?  
**Questions**—An opportunity to ask or answer any questions.

Using “CUS” words is one way to “stop the line” and alert other team members to your concerns.

I am **C**oncerned  
I am **U**ncomfortable  
This is a **S**afety issue or I don't feel like this is **S**afe!

Examples: “Dr. Adams, I am *concerned* about Mr. Smith's heart rate. I'm *uncomfortable* with what we're seeing. I don't feel like this is *safe*. I think we should call the Rapid Response Team.”

“I am *concerned* about Mrs. Roberts' labor. I'm *uncomfortable* watching these late decelerations. I just don't think it's *safe* to continue labor.

### Two Challenge Rule

When an initial assertion is ignored:

- It is your responsibility to assertively voice concern at least *two times* to ensure it has been heard
- The team member being challenged must acknowledge the concern
- If the outcome is still not acceptable:
  - Take a stronger course of action
  - Utilize supervisor or chain of command

The two challenge rule empowers all team members to “stop the line” if they sense or discover an essential safety breach.

There are other tools that everyone is expected to use to improve communication during team events:

- **Call Outs**: used to communicate important information to all team members simultaneously
- **Check Backs**: closed-loop communication to ensure that information conveyed by the sender is understood by the receiver as intended (i.e. restate what was said)