



Function QUERI

Optimizing Function and Independence
Quality Enhancement Research Initiative

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

How Would You Like to Receive Updates?



The Function QUERI team would like to hear from YOU about how you want to receive communication updates from our team! We have a short 2-minute survey <https://tinyurl.com/FQnews> to hear about what kinds of information you'd like to receive and how often.

STRIDE's New Coordinator

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Caitlin Kappler, MSW recently joined the team as the new project coordinator for STRIDE. Caitlin has over 10 years of public health experience working in North Carolina and overseas. Before joining HSR&D, she completed two tours with the US Peace Corps, spending two years in Guatemala focusing on health education in elementary schools and one year in Zambia assisting with the USAID-funded program aimed at reducing nationwide infant and maternal mortality.

On a local level, she has worked as a contractor with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Duke University, and the North Carolina Division of Public Health specializing in public health research projects, program evaluations, and grant management.

Most recently, she was the project manager for an NIH-funded research project focused on lung cancer at the University of North Carolina's School of Medicine. Caitlin has worked with many diverse populations and groups including migrant farmworkers, community health workers, physicians, educators, children, and more. She holds a Master of Social Work degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and an undergraduate degree from Auburn University.

Caitlin grew up on her family's farm in Alabama and moved to North Carolina in 2013. In her spare time, she loves to travel and has been fortunate enough to visit 34 countries throughout 6 continents. She lives in Raleigh with her husband, dog (Rex), two cats (Aubie and Boone) and fish (Cat). She is thrilled to be a part of the HSR&D team and looks forward to serving in the VA system.

STRIDE and Caregivers FIRST Part of Diffusion Marketplace Public Launch

To mark the Veteran Health Administration's 75th anniversary, the [Diffusion Marketplace](#) selected 75 innovations to be part of the first public cohort. The goal of publicly sharing these innovations is to highlight programs and interventions developed by frontline VA clinicians and employees, and share VA best practices with other healthcare systems.

STRIDE

Last updated 12 days ago

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STRIDE is a supervised walking program for older Veterans admitted to the hospital with medical illness. STRIDE features an early assessment, supervised ambulation, and patient education about the importance of daily walking, all designed to ensure patient safety during program participation. Developed with input from multiple disciplines, STRIDE fills an urgent need for promotion of early, safe mobility in hospitalized individuals to prevent negative consequences of inpatient bedrest and immobility.

This practice is **scaling** widely with the support of national stakeholders. [See more scaling practices.](#)

ORIGIN: February 2012, Durham VA Medical Center

ADOPTIONS: 19 successful, 6 in-progress

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION: Diffusion of Excellence Promising Practice, VHA Shark Tank Winner



CATEGORIES:

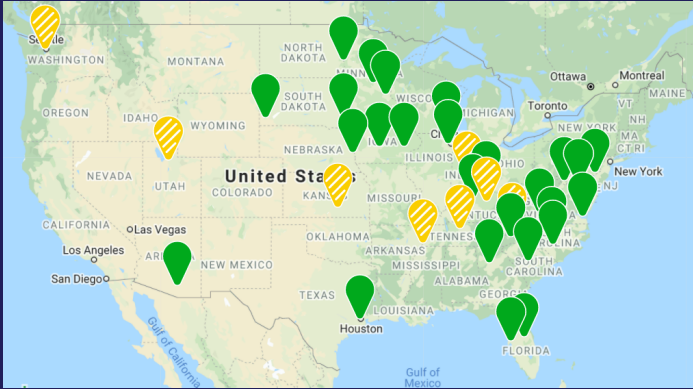
- INPATIENT CARE
- VETERAN EXPERIENCE
- AGE-FRIENDLY
- GERIATRIC HEALTH
- HIGH RELIABILITY

Function QUERI's STRIDE and Caregivers FIRST programs were selected to be part of this first cohort of innovations. The public website was released October 27th at the VHA Innovation Experience (iEX), which celebrates how VHA innovation, collaboration, and technology are breaking boundaries, forging the future of Veteran health care, and changing and saving Veteran lives.

STRIDE Continues Expansion

STRIDE "2.0" launched its second cohort on October 4th with enrollment of seven sites: Lexington (VISN 9), Tennessee Valley (VISN 9), Memphis (VISN 9), Mountain Home (VISN 9), Indianapolis (VISN 10), Puget Sound (VISN 20), and Wichita (VISN 15). As a part of the launch process, these sites participated in a Welcome Call to kick things off and will have their first Monthly Office Hours Call in early November. The Durham STRIDE team continues to work closely with Diffusion of Excellence, Safe Patient Handling & Mobility, and the Office of Nursing Services to ensure STRIDE programming aligns with other early mobility initiatives as sites continue to enroll in Function QUERI to launch STRIDE programs.

We will launch the next cohort of sites implementing STRIDE programs with Function QUERI in January 2022. Joining is easy: simply submit a participation agreement signed by a local point of contact and the facility's medical center director. Please reach out to Cassie Meyer at STRIDE@va.gov with questions or to request an informational call.



- Implementation in-progress
- Successfully implemented

Caregivers FIRST Now a Minimum Standard!

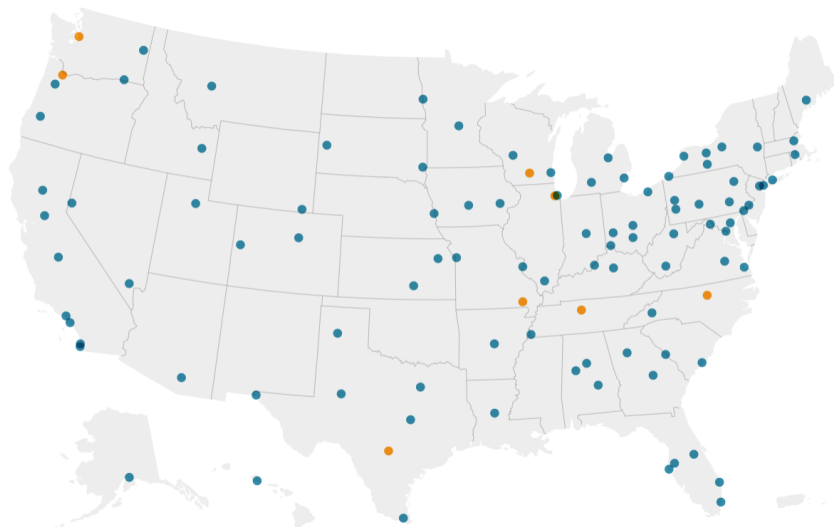
The Caregivers FIRST team is pleased to report that in fiscal year 2021, a total of 104 VA medical centers implemented the program as a strong practice with the VA Caregiver Support Program.

In September, Leah Christensen, LSCW, lead of the Program of General Caregiver Supports and Services, announced that Caregivers FIRST would be adopted as a minimum standard program! Each of the 140+ VA medical centers will aim for delivering at least two training series in fiscal year 2022.

The Function QUERI team is providing workshops for Caregiver Support Program VISN leads and site program managers so that they can help support their delivery teams as this program becomes a minimum standard.

VA Sites Implementing Caregivers FIRST, FY21

FQ 1.0 FQ 2.0



"Orange" sites represent our 8 original Function QUERI sites. "Blue" represents new sites.
Date of map: 9/30/21.

"The thing about Caregivers FIRST I particularly like is how relevant it is to the caregivers. We hear comments about how the content just really applies to the situations that the caregivers are facing - they feel it addresses the skills they need to learn more about. It's one of our favorite things that we do. We try to offer these classes as often as we can."

Jessi Houchins, MSW, LCSW
CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM MANAGER,
JOHN J. PERSHING VA MEDICAL CENTER



Check out our new Staff Testimonial video [here](#)

Group PT in Motion!

Recently, the Group Physical Therapy for Knee Osteoarthritis (Group PT) program hosted a photo shoot to capture promotional images! We are so thankful to the Veteran Representatives (VetREP) and community member that participated in this photo shoot!



Group PT is an efficient model that delivers more care to Veterans using fewer clinical hours per patient. We are excited to start speaking with interested sites and working with individuals to implement this program! If you are interested and have not yet reached out, please contact Caitlin Sullivan, Implementation Specialist, at Caitlin.Sullivan2@va.gov.

INTERESTED IN ENROLLING ?

- **STRIDE** - inpatient supervised walking program
 - Enrolling now for Winter 2022
 - Contact STRIDE@va.gov
- **Caregivers FIRST** - caregiver skills training program
 - Will begin enrolling Spring 2022
 - Contact CaregiversFIRST@va.gov
- **Group PT** - group physical therapy program
 - Will begin enrolling in the Fall 2021
 - Contact Caitlin.Sullivan2@va.gov

WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR PROGRAMS?

- STRIDE: <https://marketplace.va.gov/practices/the-stride-program>
- Caregivers FIRST: <https://marketplace.va.gov/practices/caregivers-first>
- Group PT: <https://marketplace.va.gov/practices/group-physical-therapy-for-knee-oa>

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