

## **Strengthening Teams and Communication through TeamSTEPPS™**

TeamSTEPPS™ [Team Strategies and Tools to Enhance Performance and Patient Safety] is an evidence based teamwork training system developed by the US Department of Defence Patient Safety Programme in collaboration with the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality that contributes to effective team performance and safe care.

The project involves training health care staff in the knowledge, skills and attitudes that contribute to effective teams, improved communication and enhanced clinical outcomes. The objective is to improve team performance by embedding in practice four key areas of the TeamSTEPPS™ framework:

- leadership [motivating teams, allocating resources and tasks],
- situation monitoring [awareness and a common understanding of the environment that the team is operating in]
- mutual support [anticipation and action as a response to team members needs and workload] and
- communication [ability to share information regardless of the situation].

It uses well proven methods from aviation and other high risk industries to ensure effective handover of clinical information. The project will also develop the critical aspects of teamwork that help build a safety culture. Information on TeamSTEPPS™ is available on <http://dodpatientsafety.usuhs.mil/teamsteps/>

The project aims to implement and evaluate the TeamSTEPPS™ training system in targeted handover points including: Nursing/Midwifery and Medical change of shift, Emergency Department to Intensive Care Unit, Emergency Department to community, Inter-hospital transfer, Discharge from hospital to community

Training will be provided to health care staff through workshops facilitated by clinical leaders. The project will be evaluated by direct observation of handover to identify areas for improvement. Using Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) cycles the training programme will be modified to suit the Australian health care setting.