

APRIL 2022 EDITION



Function QUERI

Optimizing Function and Independence
Quality Enhancement Research Initiative

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Welcome Connor Drake, PhD! Function QUERI Implementation Scientist



Connor Drake is joining the Implementation Core as an Implementation Scientist. Dr. Drake received his doctoral training in Health Policy and Management at the University of North Carolina Gillings School of Global Public Health. His training and research interests sit at the intersection of implementation science, population health management, evidence-based care, primary care redesign, and health equity. He is also a Duke University K12 Research Scholar.

Hitting the Road for Caregiving

In March, Function QUERI investigator Courtney Van Houtven dusted off her luggage to represent caregiving research in Washington, DC. She was able to meet with the Caregivers Support Program (CSP), a key operational partner for Caregivers FIRST.




Left to right: Tim Jobin, Deputy Director, VA CSP;
Colleen Richardson, National Director, VA CSP;
Courtney Van Houtven, Function QUERI

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What is Group PT ?

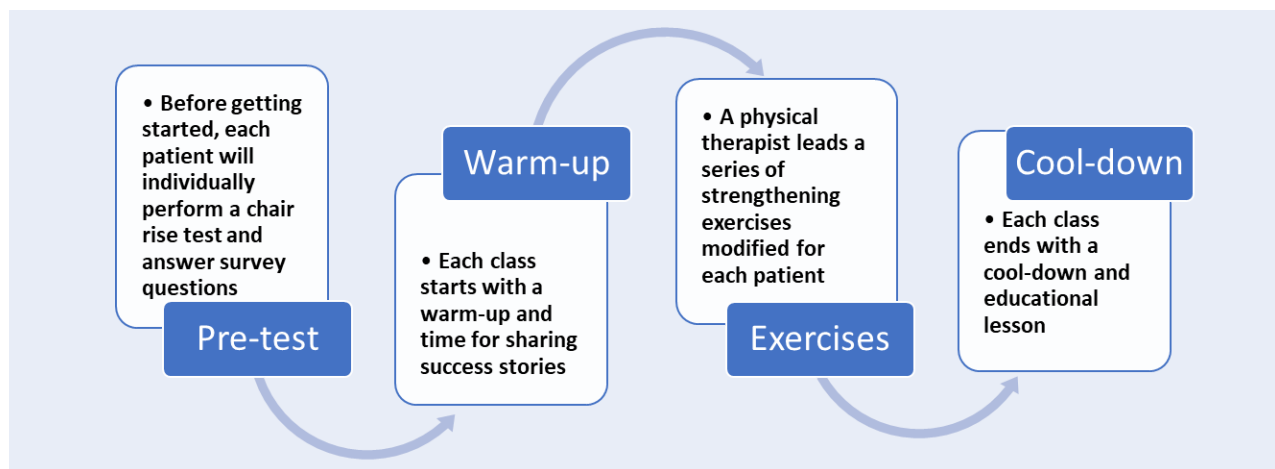
The Group PT team is busy enrolling sites for our first cohort! If you have read our newsletter before, you may have seen the benefits of implementing this program as part of Function QUERI:



- Group PT is an **efficient model** requiring **fewer clinical hours per patient**.
- **Sites will receive tools and resources** to support implementation of Group PT.
- The program can be **adapted** to fit local needs.

However, you may still be wondering, exactly **what is Group PT?** Here's the scoop:

This program targets patients with **knee osteoarthritis**. Patients can be referred from a treating provider or via self referral. The physical therapist receiving the consult will review the patient's medical history to confirm the patient is appropriate and then set up an **initial evaluation** to determine strength and functional status of the patient. After that, the patient can be scheduled for the first Group PT class! There are **six classes** in a full Group PT session. Each class includes the following components:



Frequently asked question:

1. Can a physical therapy assistant or kinesiotherapist lead the class? **Yes!**
2. Do we provide guidance on the exercise series for patients? **Yes!**
3. Do we provide CPRS notes for capturing data from the initial evaluation and Group PT class? **Yes!**
4. If my site participates, how quickly do we need to lead a class? **We expect your site will lead at least one Group PT session (6 classes) within the first 6 months of participation.**

Want to learn more? Do you have other questions? Contact Caitlin Sullivan, Implementation Specialist, at Caitlin.Sullivan2@va.gov, or the Group PT team at GroupPT@va.gov.

Does STRIDE Impact Disparities in Hospitalization Outcomes?

Function QUERI is thrilled to announce that Sarah Wilson, PhD won a QUERI Initiative award to Advance Diversity in Implementation Leadership (ADIL) award to work with our STRIDE inpatient mobility program. For the next two years, Dr. Wilson will be quantifying disparities in hospitalization outcomes prior to implementation of STRIDE, disparities in Veteran access to the program, and staff fidelity of the program.



Ultimately through this work, Dr. Wilson will further determine whether and to what extent there are disparities in the effect of the STRIDE program on hospitalization outcomes (i.e., does this program work equally well for all Veterans?).

STRIDE Continues Expansion

Function QUERI is continuing active enrollment of VA facilities interested in launching a STRIDE program in the acute care setting. We have enrolled 15 VA Medical Centers since June 2021 and we are looking to expand our network by enrolling more facilities!

Ways you can support the STRIDE Team in growing our network:

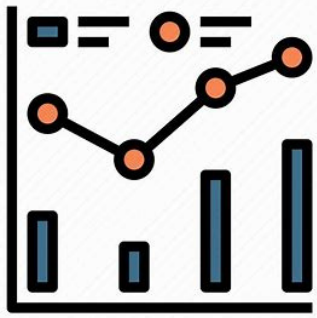
- 1) Mention** STRIDE as a patient mobility solution on local REC ICC calls, on national Community of Practice calls, and with any other specialty groups you're a part of
- 2) Encourage** your VISN leaders to consider STRIDE as a VISN-wide Strategic Initiative
- 3) Contact** our team to see how STRIDE could benefit their facilities
- 4) Share** this newsletter and our contact information with colleagues at other VA facilities who might be interested or who might know someone who is interested



We offer rolling enrollment for interested sites and joining is easy: simply submit a participation agreement (shared by the Function QUERI team) signed by your facility's medical center director.

Please reach out to Caitlin Kappler at caitlin.kappler@va.gov with questions or to request an informational call.

Caregivers FIRST Data Dashboard



In partnership with the VA Caregiver Support Program (CSP) as part of the national minimum standard, Caregivers FIRST sites now have access to a data dashboard that provides a summary of key implementation activities. Sites and CSP VISN leads can now access number of caregivers referred, enrolled, and trained as part of the program.

Function QUERI would like to thank **Kate Lewis**, Health System Specialist with CSP for leading the effort. So far, the dashboard reports approximately **750 caregivers trained** nationally with Caregivers FIRST since October 2021! Caregivers FIRST sites can access the Dashboard via our [SharePoint page](#).

Caregivers FIRST Begins Study Cohort!

We have been busy enrolling sites for our Function QUERI '2.0' Caregivers FIRST project, which officially kicked off April 25th (see sites below)!

Over the next year, our team will be working with these sites to provide resources to support Caregivers FIRST delivery and to also help us answer the question 'what is the right amount of support sites need to launch Caregivers FIRST or increase caregiver enrollment'?

VISN 01	405	White River Junction VAMC
	608	Manchester VAMC
	631	VA Central Western Massachusetts HCS
VISN 02	632	Northport VAMC
VISN 04	503	Altoona - James E. Van Zandt VAMC
	642	Corporal Michael J. Crescenzo VAMC
VISN 05	581	Hershel "Woody" Williams VAMC
VISN 06	658	Salem VAMC
	659	W.G. (Bill) Hefner VAMC
VISN 07	679	Tuscaloosa VAMC
	557	Carl Vinson VAMC
VISN 08	548	West Palm Beach VAMC
VISN 10	515	Battle Creek VAMC
	538	Chillicothe VAMC
VISN 12	550	VA Illiana HCS
	585	Oscar G. Johnson VAMC
VISN 16	564	Veterans HCS System of the Ozarks
	586	G.V. (Sonny) Montgomery VAMC
	667	Overton Brooks VAMC
VISN 17	740	VA Texas Valley Coastal Bend HCS
VISN 19	575	VA Western Colorado HCS
VISN 20	653	Roseburg VA HCS
	692	White City VAMC
VISN 23	656	St. Cloud VA HCS



Function QUERI recently published an article looking at how clinical staff's understanding about roles in promoting inpatient mobility evolved during implementation of the STRIDE.

Led by Qualitative Analyst **Rebecca Bruening MPH**, our team found that researchers and practitioners implementing clinical programs should allow for, and encourage, flexibility in staff roles in planning for implementation of a new clinical program, encourage the development of advocates, and engage leaders in program planning and sustainment efforts. Link to article here: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35319083/>.

INTERESTED IN ENROLLING ?

- **STRIDE** - inpatient supervised walking program
 - Enrolling for Summer and Fall 2022
 - Contact Caitlin.Kappler@va.gov
- **Group PT** - group physical therapy program
 - Enrolling NOW!
 - 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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