

Translating Research Into Practice

QEP Executive Summary

“Translating Research into Practice” (TRIP) is the title of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) for LSUHSC-Shreveport, which will begin in academic year 2014-15. TRIP will focus on improving medical students’ abilities to make sound decisions based on critically appraising and applying research literature to their practice of medicine.

A needs analysis survey to all LSHUHS-Shreveport faculty, staff, and students was conducted in the summer of 2012. The survey results identified two skill areas needing improvement: “communication skills” and “critical thinking skills”. A follow-up survey on both topics identified critical thinking as the primary concern. This conclusion was supported by student scores on national licensure exams (USMLE Step 1), current student exam scores in biostatistics, and results of a national standard questionnaire of medical school graduates (Association of American Medical Colleges Graduation Questionnaire).

Further assessment by the QEP Committee narrowed the scope of the critical thinking topic to include specific skills of understanding and using biostatistics, critical appraisal of research literature, and understanding research design. The need for improvement in these areas was especially evident in the School of Medicine; therefore, TRIP will be offered initially in the medical school. Expansion into the School of Allied Health Professions will be considered once the initial results in the medical school have been assessed. The goal of TRIP is:

Translating Research Into Practice (TRIP) will focus on making critical appraisal of research a seamless part of the schools of LSUHSC-Shreveport. It will seek to increase students’ ability to:

- Develop creative hypotheses.
- Determine legitimate research methodology.
- Critically analyze published studies.
- Apply relevant scientific literature to practice.

Student learning outcomes for TRIP include:

1. Students will be able to locate and evaluate appropriate resources for scientific information.
2. Students will demonstrate proper application of methods in research design.
3. Students will be able to critically appraise the scientific literature.
4. Students will be able to identify and investigate a research question.
5. Students will be able to present and defend a research project.

Each year of the medical school curriculum will include specific activities to achieve TRIP student learning outcomes. During the first three years, TRIP Actions will introduce and reinforce elements of critical appraisal of research. As a capstone event in the fourth year, students will design and present a legitimate research question in a peer evaluation format. An advanced option is available for students who wish to actually complete a basic or clinical research project, participation in the student-developed Research Distinction Track (RDT).

TRIP has strong support from the university administration. One of the first actions taken by the QEP Committee after determining the TRIP focus was to develop a comprehensive six-year budget. The budget includes salary for QEP staff as well as operating and travel expenses for the duration of TRIP. The chancellor approved the budget as submitted by the committee.