

Title:

Stretching the Simulated Dollar: Combining Reflective Practice and Team-Based Learning

Educators:

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Needs and Objective

The cost, time and logistical requirements of typical simulated patient (SP) encounter designs are substantial thus limiting the application of this useful methodology. We designed a cost-effective approach to training pediatric residents in the delivery of bad news that would allow a large group of learners (e.g., 25-30 pediatric residents) to make optimal use of four SP encounters in a 2.5 hour period.

Description of Program

Residents attended a workshop where they were assigned to four “Learning Groups” of 6-8 residents each. Each group had 4 encounters with SPs, each depicting a different type of bad news scenario. Encounters consisted of 3 phases: group preparation, encounter, and group review with SPs. Volunteer representatives from each group interacted with the SPs while the remainder of the Learning Group observed via video monitors. The observers were tasked with reflecting on their own practice, not to critique the performance of the volunteer.

Discussion/Reflection

135 second year residents have participated in this design over a 3 year period. Retrospective pre-post surveys of self-efficacy in delivering various types of bad news revealed significant improvement ($p < 0.0001$ for all 7 pre-post comparisons). Participants also described the encounters as realistic, useful without being overly stressful, and appropriate for their level of training. In a one year follow-up survey, the majority of residents who, in the intervening year, had the experience of actually delivering one or more of the 4 types of bad news specifically addressed in the workshop rated the workshop as useful in practice.

We have learned that workshop designs combining reflective practice and team-based learning methods provide a cost-effective approach to the use of SPs for communication skills training.