

components were cohesive. Full support and creative input was required from the simulation technicians to ensure the activity's success.

**Findings:** Students fed back that they enjoyed the activity and were observed to work effectively together and prioritize and delegate throughout the task with minimal supervision. Students also stated the scenario context was helpful to apply their prior learning and were pleased that they had been able to manage this patient presentation together. Feedback from facilitators was also positive and both staff and students found it to be an engaging experience.

**Conclusion:** Simulation escape rooms offer an innovative and engaging way for students to apply learning and vital practice technical and non-technical skills. For educators, clear learning outcomes and allowing sufficient design time is a necessity.

**Ethics statement:** Authors confirm that all relevant ethical standards for research conduct and dissemination have been met. The submitting author confirms that relevant ethical approval was granted, if applicable.

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## DESIGN

A110

### SIMULATED PHYSIOTHERAPY PLACEMENT: AN ALTERNATIVE TO CLINICAL PLACEMENT FOR FIRST YEAR UNDERGRADUATE PHYSIOTHERAPY STUDENTS

**Karen Stevens<sup>1</sup>**, Helen Batty<sup>1</sup>, Ross Mallett<sup>1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield, United Kingdom

**Correspondence:** [k.stevens@shu.ac.uk](mailto:k.stevens@shu.ac.uk)

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**Background and aim:** To address the existing workforce deficit within Physiotherapy an extra 500 Physiotherapists need to be trained every year - an additional 15% of current student numbers. The biggest barrier to expansion of student numbers is placement capacity. Novel and innovative models of placement are being trialled, with a strong emphasis on the four pillars of clinical practice. Simulation, and virtual based placements offer alternative models of placement provision [1]. Current literature has detailed successful simulated clinical placement within Physiotherapy using full or partial substitution of clinical placement. It has been shown that switching up to 25% of practice learning to a simulated model does not compromise student attainment or competency [2]. However, these studies tend to involve small student numbers. For simulated placements to be a practical alternative they need to be delivered at scale. The aim of this pilot project was to develop, deliver and evaluate an on campus simulated placement experience for 140 first year Physiotherapy students at a large UK university.

**Activity:** A four-week program of activities was designed to simulate the core learning that occurs on a typical physiotherapy clinical placement. Including case scenarios with standardized patients, virtual case discussions with clinicians, expert patient panel, day in the life of videos, note writing workshops and live streaming of patient sessions. Students attended two observational days in practice with structured debriefing on campus. Themes for the placement included communication, risk assessment, patient journeys, wellness and effective learning on placement. The development of the learning activities was research and stakeholder informed. Clinical scenarios were co-designed with level 5 Physiotherapy students.

**Findings:** Placement evaluation was collected via a questionnaire including open ended questions and Likert scales (0-5). Students agreed that that placement was engaging and interesting (mean score of 3.45), with the greatest agreement that the placement had improved note writing, communication and understanding of professionalism. Students ranked simulated clinical scenarios and observation as their preference for activity, with peer learning to support these activities to be ranked the lowest.

A review of placement attainment data noted a correlation with previous clinical placement data. There was an increase in a student's perception of their preparedness to go on a clinical placement pre and post simulated placement.

**Conclusion:** Large scale, simulated on campus placements are workable and a useful learning experience for first year Physiotherapy students.

**Ethics statement:** Authors confirm that all relevant ethical standards for research conduct and dissemination have been met. The submitting author confirms that relevant ethical approval was granted, if applicable.

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## CONTENT

A111

### UNDERGRADUATE NURSING PROGRAMME ENTRY: ENCOURAGING OFFER HOLDERS TO SELECT THEIR UNIVERSITY OFFER, BASED ON AN INFORMED OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMME CONTENT

**Carrie Hamilton<sup>1</sup>**, Julie Cairns<sup>2</sup>, Jim Bird<sup>2</sup>, Caroline Tomkins<sup>1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>SimComm Academy, Romsey, United Kingdom, <sup>2</sup>University of Southampton, Southampton, UK

**Correspondence:** [carrie.hamilton@simcommacademy.com](mailto:carrie.hamilton@simcommacademy.com)

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**Background and aim:** Choosing the right university and programme is crucial for aspiring nursing students and their families. With so many options available, it can be challenging to make an informed decision [1-3]. The aim of this initiative was to provide student nurse offer-holders and their parents/partners with an overview of the undergraduate nursing

programme's content, in an effort to encourage them to select the right university.

**Activity:** The initiative was developed and conducted over six months (Dec 2022 - May 2023). It consisted of five Saturday morning sessions, each included taster lectures, clinical skills sessions, and simulations with actor role players. Offer-holders attended one rotation, while the parents/partners of offer-holders attended another rotation. The facilitated simulations were collaboratively designed by the University branch specialists and the education provider, and involved actor role players. In order to cover child, adult and mental health branches, for aspiring students, the scenario content was broad based and applicable to all.

- Scenario 1: Communication with relatives of a baby failing to thrive
- Scenario 2: Communication with an adult patient and her husband

Both simulations were conducted as forum theatre and aligned with NHS values.

**Findings:** Evaluation forms completed by potential nursing students and their parents/partners were overwhelmingly positive. Attendees reported that the sessions were informative and enjoyable, with the simulations being a particular highlight. The use of actor role players helped to make the simulations more realistic and engaging. Attendees felt that the sessions assisted them to better understand what to expect from the nursing programme, which would aid them in making a more informed decision about which university to choose.

**Conclusion:** Offer holders and their families need to make an informed decision when choosing a nursing programme. The study showed that providing a comprehensive overview of the programme's content through taster lectures, clinical skills sessions, and simulations can be an effective way to encourage students to select the right university. The use of actor role players in the simulations helped to create a realistic and engaging learning experience for attendees. Overall, this initiative highlights the importance of providing potential nursing students with the necessary information to make a decision about their education. By making an informed decision, the fit is likely to be right and the chances of attrition reduced. Further studies will be conducted by the university admissions teams to establish if these tasters assist with retention.

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## DESIGN

A112

### VITAL CONVERSATIONS FOR STUDENT PODIATRISTS: A 'REAL' SIMULATED PLACEMENT

Jess Spencer<sup>1</sup>, Carrie Hamilton<sup>1</sup>, Rachel Forss<sup>2</sup>, Channine Clarke<sup>2</sup>;  
<sup>1</sup>SimComm Academy, Romsey, United Kingdom, <sup>2</sup>University of Brighton, Brighton, UK

**Correspondence:** [carrie.hamilton@simcommacademy.com](mailto:carrie.hamilton@simcommacademy.com)  
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**Background and aim:** It is recognized that clinical placements are sometimes limited for allied health professionals (AHPs) [1]. This, coupled with the 'People Plan' [2], which highlights the need for increasing numbers of AHPs in the workforce, has led to considerations of alternatives to traditional clinical placements. We were approached by a podiatry undergraduate programme to assist with delivering a podiatry simulated placement, for BSc and separately for MSc podiatry students, each for three days, for the academic year 2022/2023.

**Activity:** Development of the simulated placement took five weeks; it was collaborative, with input from HEI academics, subject specialists, and simulation-based educationalists. Six scenarios were created which aligned with the HCPC Standards of Proficiency for Podiatrists [3]. These reflected the breadth of experiences students might have experienced in a clinical placement; they focused on communication and behaviours. Actors were involved in playing the roles of simulated colleagues, patients, and relatives, with experienced facilitators setting up a safe, non-threatening, immersive learning environment, covering triggers and time outs in the pre-brief. The following were areas covered:

- Scope of practice and autonomous practice
- Professional judgement
- Culture, equality, diversity and non-discriminatory practice
- Confidentiality and professionalism
- Team working
- Communication skills, face to face and telephone
- Safe practice environments

The learning was underpinned by a communication skills framework enabling students to structure their conversations and behaviours appropriately. Reflection was used post debrief and explored the subsequent day. All scenarios were presented as either forum theatre or fishbowl simulation, with all students being present in the same space as the simulation.

**Findings:** Evaluation was positive from both BSc and MSc groups. Students highly rated the structured approach provided by the communication framework stating it helped them converse effectively and build rapport with patients, relatives and colleagues. The inclusion of actors, although daunting for some initially, added hugely to their learning experience. Students commented on how they felt more prepared for real-world situations and how they hadn't appreciated the breadth and impact of their practice.

**Conclusion:** Simulated placements can offer a safe and controlled environment for podiatry students to develop their skills and engage in vital conversations with patients, relatives and colleagues. Facilitators should adapt to different confidence levels and learning styles of the students and actors fully briefed and in line with these adaptations. These simulated real-life placements are replicable and can help in preparing a workforce fit for purpose.

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