

Real or Unreal? A qualitative study into effects of simulation training on engagement

An investigation on how in situ and off-site simulation training affects student engagement during Obstetrics & Gynaecology placements

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Results:

Students discussed how their confidence improved during an emergency. They discussed how their understanding of the medical teams improved however, their participation and team role remain unchanged. These changes in their confidence and participation improved their ability to interact and engage on the wards.

Conclusion:

Simulation training improved student's confidence in clinical activities during emergencies therefore improving their learning. The training also improved students' understanding of ward-based communities of practice. Simulations targeted towards including medical students during emergencies has the potential to greatly improve medical student's engagement and learning experiences.

Background

Labour wards are high-risk areas therefore preparing undergraduate students for training in one is vital. Engagement, defined as a student's level of integration and interaction with patients and the medical team is important for ward-based learning. Existing research in simulation training focusses on its effectiveness in improving skill and knowledge. Little research has examined whether simulation training changes engagement during training; a vital component of learning. This study compares the value of in situ versus off site simulation training for undergraduate students and how this affects their engagement on an Obstetrics and Gynaecology placement. In situ training will involve simulations occurring on the labour wards and off-site will take place in a Simulation Suite training facility.

Method

As part of their training, medical students attend and observe simulation training; some on the wards (in situ simulations) and others in Simulation Suites (off-site simulations). In this research focus groups were held with eight fourth year medical students to determine whether simulation training improved engagement during their O&G placements. Two focus groups were conducted separately for those who had undertaken in situ simulation and for those who experienced off-site simulation. During the focus groups students discussed their participation within the team before the training and whether this changed after the training. Their confidence and engagement levels were investigated using the same questions for both focus groups. Data was thematically analysed within a social constructivist framework.

Thematic Map of Results



Key Messages

- Simulation training can improve students confidence in clinical activities during emergencies
- It can also improve understanding of teams
- Participation and role remained unchanged
- Further research should consider how to improve a students role within the team