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Mr. Sim Man: Bringing Reality into the Lab

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Mr. Sim Man

Bringing reality into the lab

John Gonzales complains of acute chest pain immediately after his pre-op examination for arthroscopic knee surgery.

“My chest is getting tight, and it feels like a heavy weight is on my chest.”

His breathing speeds up; he becomes agitated and asks more questions, and his wife expresses concern. He’s given oxygen, his blood pressure is checked, and the doctor is called. After receiving medication, Mr. Gonzales’s pain improves, but his surgery is delayed and more tests and treatments are ordered.

And then the exercise is over. Mr. Gonzales is reallyMr. Sim Man

experiencing some difficulty.

“A critical part of developing the simulation lab learning is making sure that it fits into the curriculum, Taylor said. “It’s not about trying to add another thing for students to do, but rather how we integrate it into student learning to achieve curriculum outcomes.”

The scenarios in the Simulation Lab stress critical thinking and team work. Jensen said, “It’s about knowing what to do under pressure, which is what I think a lot of nurses experience,” she said. “I felt the same way I did when I was in the hospital doing a procedure on a patient for the first time.”

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John Gonzales complains of acute chest pain immediately after his pre-op examination for arthroscopic knee surgery. “My chest is getting tight, and it’s hard to get a deep breath,” he tells a team of three nurses examining him. “The pain is over my breastbone and it feels like a heavy weight is on my chest.”

His breathing speeds up; he becomes agitated and asks for more oxygen. He is given oxygen, his blood pressure is checked, and the doctor is called. After receiving medication, Mr. Gonzales’s pain improves, but his surgery is delayed and more tests are ordered.

And then the exercise is over. Mr. Gonzales is really Eric, a mannequin who talks and breathes, accepts an IV and can simulate various medical situations. “Mr. Sim Man” is part of the latest trend in healthcare education, providing students with realistic experiences in health crises without fear of making a critical mistake that could harm a patient.

The Nursing Simulation Lab at the Linfield-Good Samaritan School of Nursing was opened last spring under the leadership of Jana Taylor, professor of nursing on the Portland Campus, and Georgia Maudsley, laboratory coordinator, in collaboration with the other nursing faculty. The lab was created, in part, with a grant from the Oregon Simulation Alliance, a statewide group that works with the Governor’s Healthcare Workforce Initiative. Taylor is a member of the Governing Council of the Oregon Simulation Alliance and Maudsley is what I think a lot of nurses experience,” she said. “I felt the same way I did when I was in the hospital doing a procedure on a patient for the first time.”

A key component is the debriefing session that follows each simulation and helps students develop skills for reflecting on their practice. With faculty gently and skillfully guiding the discussion, students talk about what went right and what went wrong during the simulation. Reviewing a videotape of the simulation experience during the debriefing can also be useful in helping students critique their interactions and skill performance.

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Amanda Wissel ’06, center, calls the physician for instructions while Grace Hanjan ’06 checks the “patient’s” IV and Leah Carter ’06 monitors the blood pressure during a simulation. Each group of students is given a different scenario in which a patient is experiencing some difficulty.

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