Clinical Simulation in Nursing (2010) 6, e223-e229

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Clinical Simulation in Nursing

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Featured Article

A Collaborative Project to Influence Nursing Faculty Interest in Simulation

Debra A. Jansen, PhD, RN*, Catherine Berry, MSN, CCRN, CNE, Gail Hanson Brenner, MSN, RN, Nita Johnson, MSN, RN, Gunnar Larson, MSN, RN

College of Nursing and Health Sciences, University of Wisconsin—Eau Claire, Eau Claire, WI 54702-4004, USA

KEYWORDS
simulation;
nursing education;
faculty development;
collaboration;
nursing faculty;
human patient simulator;
patient simulation

Background: Despite its popularity, many nurse educators are reluctant or unprepared to use manikin-based simulation in their teaching. The purposes of this article are to describe a state-wide collaborative project to help baccalaureate and associate degree program faculty develop and utilize manikin-based simulations in online and face-to-face nursing courses and to share assessment findings regarding the effectiveness of the project in influencing faculty interest in simulation.
Method: Faculty completed a simulation interest and usefulness survey at the start and end of the project year.
Results/conclusions: Trends of increased comfort in creating and using simulation in courses were observed and all faculty teams reported developing simulations. Challenges and suggested solutions for maintaining faculty interest and engagement in learning new teaching pedagogies are discussed.

Cite this article:
Jansen, D. A., Berry, C., Brenner, G. H., Johnson, N., & Larson, G. (2010, November). A collaborative project to influence nursing faculty interest in simulation. *Clinical Simulation in Nursing*, *6*(6), e223-e229. doi:10.1016/j.ecns.2009.08.006

The incorporation of manikin-based simulations into courses is becoming an expectation in nursing programs across the nation. Simulation is emerging as a standard teaching—learning practice identified by accrediting bodies; and for many prospective faculty and students, the presence of simulation may be the deciding factor when they are choosing a nursing program (Turcato, Roberson, & Covert, 2008). With evidence accumulating regarding its value for student learning, as Jeffries (2009) noted, ''simulation could eventually be used for the majority of clinical time in nursing education'' (p. 71). Yet many nursing faculty are reluctant or ill equipped to use manikin-based simulations in their courses, thus necessitating the need for effective means of preparing nurse educators for this technologically-demanding teaching—learning pedagogy (Jeffries, 2008).

The goal of the Wisconsin Technology Enhanced Collaborative Nursing Education (WI-TECNE) project was to strengthen technology-enhanced teaching approaches among nursing faculty from five University of Wisconsin System and five neighboring Wisconsin Technical College System nursing programs. One of the specific aims of WI-TECNE was to help faculty create and utilize manikin-based simulations in online and face-to-face nursing courses. To accomplish this aim, brown-bag videoconferences, online discussions, and a workshop were developed for the nursing faculty. The purposes of this article are to describe these

Corresponding author: Jansenda@uwec.edu (D. A. Jansen).

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doi:10.1016/j.ecns.2009.08.006

project activities and to share assessment findings regarding the effectiveness of the WI-TECNE actions in influencing nursing faculty interest in creating and utilizing manikin-based simulations. Challenges and suggested solutions for maintaining faculty interest and engagement in learning new teaching pedagogies are also discussed.

Review of the Literature and Project Background

Literature Review

Key Points

- Although the use of manikin-based simulations is becoming an expectation in nursing programs, many educators are unprepared and reluctant to incorporate simulations into courses.
- A faculty development project involving a workshop and brownbag videoconferences assisted baccalaureate and associate degree program faculty in developing and utilizing manikin-based simulations; and a trend of increased comfort in creating and using simulation was observed.
- Care must be taken not to overload faculty with too many development activities, particularly at more demanding times of the academic year.

Jeffries (2005) described simulations as activities including "role playing and the use of devices such as interactive videos or mannequins" (p. 97) that replicate clinical environments; they are intended to enable participants to demonstrate procedures, think critically, and utilize the decision-making process. Manikin-based simulations may involve manikins of low, medium, or high fidelity or degree of realism. A common occurrence at many nursing programs and health care institutions during the past few years has been the purchase of a high- or medium-fidelity manikin that sits underutilized or unused in its box, with educators unprepared and reluctant to use the equipment (Kardong-Edgren, 2009; Leigh & Hurst, 2008; Medley & Horne, 2005).

This underutilization of the manikins is understandable, considering the many barriers faculty and staff encounter to incorporating manikin-based simulations into courses. Examples of challenges have included inadequate knowledge of how to implement simulations in curricula and to operate complex computerized equipment; limited time to develop and carry out simulation scenarios; costs associated with purchasing, maintaining, and upgrading simulation equipment and laboratories; ongoing faculty and staff training needs and associated expenses and time commitments; faculty technology fears; classroom and laboratory scheduling difficulties; lack of simulation equipment and space; need for support staff; trouble dealing with large class sizes; and insufficient administrative, faculty, and peer support and interest (Davis, Soltani, & Wilkins, 2009; Feingold, Calaluce, & Kallen, 2004; Jansen, Johnson, Larson, Berry, & Brenner, 2009; Jones & Hegge, 2008; King, Moseley, Hindenlang, & Kuritz, 2008; Nehring, Ellis, & Lashley, 2001; Nehring & Lashley, 2004; Turcato et al., 2008). Through WI-TECNE, we attempted to overcome some of these obstacles, particularly those related to the need for faculty development and training and mixed faculty interest. Inadequate faculty interest and buy-in are some of the most complicated challenges to overcome when a nursing program is implementing simulation (Griffin-Sobel, 2009; Starkweather & Kardong-Edgren, 2008).

Faculty development has been proposed as a means of favorably influencing mind-sets regarding simulation and promoting its use. King et al. (2008) used an educational intervention to significantly improve comfort levels, attitudes, and intentions to use simulation among faculty in an associate-degree nursing program. In their description of a 2-day simulation retreat, Starkweather and Kardong-Edgren (2008) reported that the event stimulated greater faculty use of simulation in a nursing program. With little research in this area, studies examining faculty development as a means of influencing interest in and utilization of simulation are needed.

WI-TECNE

WI-TECNE is a 5-year collaborative faculty development project funded through the Health Resources and Services Administration (Grant no. U1KHP07714). It aims to enhance patient safety and quality of patient care by supporting the ability of nursing faculty members from baccalaureate- and associate-degree programs to utilize technology-enhanced teaching approaches as they prepare nursing students for the complexities of modern health care. For each of the 5 years, for nursing faculty from the participating universities and neighboring technical colleges, one of the five University of Wisconsin System campuses is responsible for providing faculty development opportunities related to a different technology, that is, telehealth and informatics, manikin-based simulations, virtual learning, problem-based learning, and e-learning.

The universities were already jointly offering a statewide collaborative baccalaureate completion program for RNs with associate degrees. The majority of the courses in the completion program are offered online, with each of the five universities having primary responsibility for a core course. As part of WI-TECNE, educators from each university and neighboring technical college would form a *scholar* team to develop plans for implementing a technology in the university's specific online core