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Standards of Best Practice: Simulation

INACSL Standards of Best Practice: SimulationSM Simulation Design

INACSL Standards Committee

KEYWORDS

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As the science of simulation continues to evolve, so does the need for additions and revisions to the INACSL Standards of Best Practice: SimulationSM. Therefore, the INACSL Standards of Best Practice: Simulation are [living documents](#).

Standard

Simulation-based experiences are purposefully designed to meet identified objectives and optimize achievement of expected outcomes.

Background

Standardized simulation design provides a framework for developing effective simulation-based experiences. The design of simulation-based experiences incorporates best practices from adult learning,¹ education,^{2,3} instructional design,^{4,5} clinical standards of care,^{6,7} evaluation,⁸⁻¹¹ and simulation pedagogy.¹²⁻¹⁶ Purposeful simulation design promotes essential structure, process, and outcomes that

are consistent with programmatic goals and/or institutional mission. The design of effective health care simulations facilitates consistent outcomes and strengthens the overall value of the simulation-based experience in all settings.

All simulation-based experiences require purposeful and systematic, yet flexible and cyclical planning. To achieve expected outcomes, the design and development of simulations should consider criteria that facilitate the effectiveness of simulation-based experiences.

Potential consequences of not following this standard may include ineffective assessment of participants and inability of participants to meet identified objectives or achieve expected outcomes. In addition, not following this standard can result in suboptimal or inefficient utilization of resources when designing simulation activities.

Criteria Necessary to Meet This Standard

1. Perform a needs assessment to provide the foundational evidence of the need for a well-designed simulation-based experience.
2. Construct measureable objectives.
3. Structure the format of a simulation based on the purpose, theory, and modality for the simulation-based experience.
4. Design a scenario or case to provide the context for the simulation-based experience.
5. Use various types of fidelity to create the required perception of realism.
6. Maintain a facilitative approach that is participant centered and driven by the objectives, participant's knowledge or level of experience, and the expected outcomes.
7. Begin simulation-based experiences with a prebriefing.
8. Follow simulation-based experiences with a debriefing and/or feedback session.
9. Include an evaluation of the participant(s), facilitator(s), the simulation-based experience, the facility, and the support team.
10. Provide preparation materials and resources to promote participants' ability to meet identified objectives and achieve expected outcomes of the simulation-based experience.
11. Pilot test simulation-based experiences before full implementation.

Criterion 1: Perform a needs assessment to provide the foundational evidence of the need for a well-designed simulation-based experience.

Required Elements:

- The needs assessment may include analysis of:
 - Underlying causes of a concern (e.g., root cause or gap analysis).
 - Organizational analysis (e.g., Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis).
 - Surveys of stakeholders, participants, clinicians, and/or educators.
 - Outcome data (e.g., from pilot testing; previous simulation-based experiences; aggregate health care data).
 - Standards (e.g., certifying bodies, rules and regulations, practice guidelines).
- The needs assessment includes an examination of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and/or behaviors of individuals; organizational initiatives; systems analysis; clinical practice guidelines; quality improvement programs; and/or patient safety goals.
- Use the results of the needs assessment to guide the development of an overarching goal or broad objective for the simulation, which in turn directs the designer(s) in the development of simulation-specific objectives (see INACSL Standard: Objectives and Outcomes).

- Use the results of the needs assessment to create innovative and interactive simulation-based experiences that aim to:
 - Enhance curriculum in the classroom and/or clinical areas.
 - Provide opportunities for standardized clinical experiences.
 - Address competencies.
 - Improve quality of care and patient safety.
 - Promote readiness for clinical practice.

Criterion 2: Construct measureable objectives.

Required Elements:

- Develop broad and specific objectives to address identified needs and optimize the achievement of expected outcomes.
- Together, broad and specific objectives provide a blueprint for the design of a simulation-based experience.
 - Broad objectives reflect the purpose of the simulation-based experience and are related to organizational goals.
 - Specific objectives are related to participant performance measures.
- During the design phase, determine which objectives will or will not be available to the participant(s) before the experience.
 - Objectives that provide general information and context for the participant(s) should be disclosed (e.g., provide care for a patient with heart failure).
 - Participant performance measures or critical action checklists should not be disclosed.
- Use the measureable objectives to drive the design, development, and approach for the simulation-based experience (see INACSL Standard: Objectives and Outcomes).
- The facilitator assumes responsibility for guiding the achievement of the full set of objectives throughout the simulation-based experience (see INACSL Standard: Facilitation).

Criterion 3: Structure the format of a simulation based on the purpose, theory, and modality for the simulation-based experience.

Required Elements:

- Select the format of the simulation-based experience based on the needs assessment, resources, and broad objectives, taking into account the targeted participants.
- Use the purpose of a simulation-based experience to design and develop either a formative and/or summative encounter.
- Choose a theoretical and/or conceptual framework^{15,17,18} based on the identified purpose and the

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