



**Advancing Education Transformation: Toolkits and Simulation Using Standardized Patients to Teach Essential Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Skills**

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Simulations are rising in popularity as an effective strategy to deliver clinical nursing education. With shorter lengths of stay, increased competition for clinical placements, and restrictions that prohibit students from caring for patients deemed to be too unstable, some students may not have opportunities to care for individuals with common mental health issues. Using standardized patient experiences (SPEs), students are able to practice communication and other skills essential to psychiatric mental health nursing in a safe learning environment.

To prepare students to care for "real" patients with mental health needs, we developed a series of toolkits for use in an undergraduate psychiatric mental health nursing clinical course. Each toolkit was designed to meet a core skill set and was packaged to include learning objectives, pre-simulation activity, clinical assignment, video vignette, feedback rubric, and suggested post-simulation activities. Video vignettes involved the use of SPEs to demonstrate and teach content. Each toolkit also provides faculty with strategies aimed at helping students apply core psychiatric mental health nursing skills in a clinical setting. Toolkits were specifically designed to address: therapeutic relationship and professional boundaries, management of hallucinations and delusions, assessment of suicidal ideation, limit setting for manic patients, cognitive evaluation of dementia, and management of withdrawal in addictions. Additional toolkits will be developed to address other skill sets.

This creative approach to psychiatric mental health nursing education using simulation, specifically Standardized Patients (SPs) has enabled nursing faculty to provide consistent clinical experiences for all students that focus on teaching core psychiatric mental health nursing competencies. Funded by a NSP-II grant, these toolkits will be available to other nurse educators in Maryland. This session will provide an overview of the development, use, and evaluation of this clinical learning strategy.