

Developing a volunteer simulated patient/participant (SP) program.

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Abstract

Workshop Topic: Standardized Patients

Background/rationale:

Simulated/standardized patients or participants (SPs) are well people who are trained as proxies for others, including patients, health care professionals, and family members, in health professional education. SPs are appropriate to consider when the learning objectives relate to interpersonal or professional skills and competencies or when technical and communication/interpersonal skills are being integrated. In many sectors, there is a lack of economic resources to hire SPs and educators are increasingly working with volunteers. However, there is wide variation about what is meant by a "volunteer SP" and how to work with them. Although there are both benefits and challenges to working with volunteer SPs, there is no agreement or strong evidence about what kind of volunteer SP is most effective, if volunteer SPs are more or less effective than paid SPs and what methodology can be used to develop a volunteer SP program. At our institution, we have created the SAGE (Simulation Activities for Gerontological Education) program with a group of dedicated volunteers. In this workshop, we will use the SAGE program as a starting point for an interactive session to share experiences of and consider evidence and theory related to developing a volunteer SP program. In keeping with the conference theme of "Simulation and Value", the value of working with volunteer SPs will be addressed.

Workshop description:

This interactive workshop will include large and small group activities, and simulation activities. 2-3 learning objectives By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

1. Describe the benefits and challenges of working with volunteers in developing an SP program
2. Describe key aspects of SP methodology to consider when working with volunteers
3. Reflect on applications to their own context

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