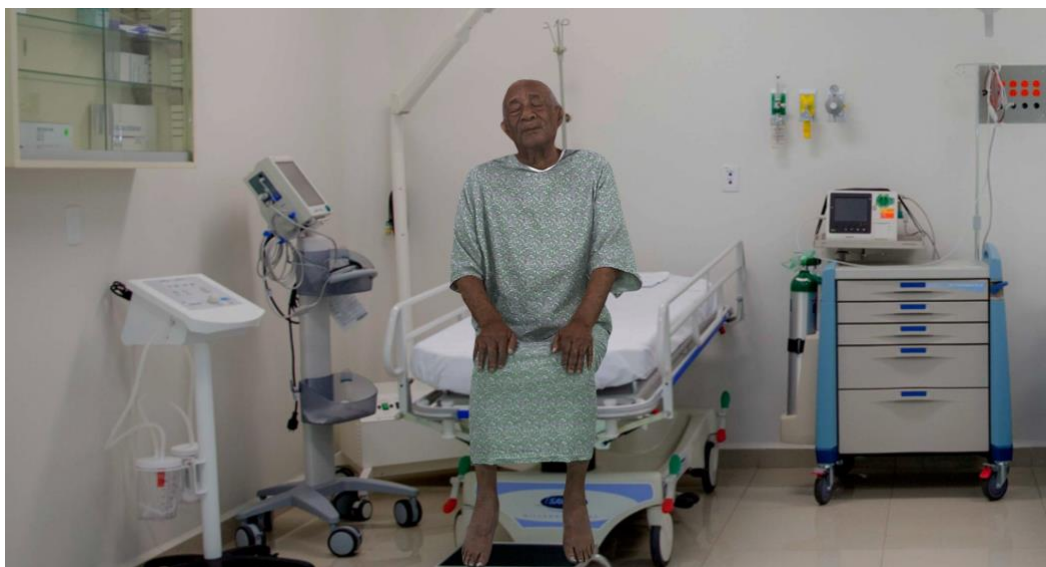


GigXR

Why Realism Matters in Nursing Simulation

There is a huge and obvious difference between a \$200 task trainer and a \$30,000 patient simulator. It's clear in the physical appearance of the manikin, its functionality and the breadth of skills it can be used to teach.

When looking at simulation to help teach students the critical thinking skills that broadly make up the basics of providing safe and effective overall care, rather than a competent grasp of a specific task, the choices are less a cost/value equation among similar products. From serious games (SGs) to standardized patients (SPs), tools to teach how to apply the principles of the clinical reasoning cycle or a related model span multiple types of simulation and levels of realism. So, why does realism matter in this kind of simulation?



Since students are being asked to develop assessment, diagnostic and communication skills rather than, say, learn how to draw blood or give injections, the advantages of realism, and what constitutes “realistic” are more complex. Here is a look at some of those factors:

Visual Realism

You're preparing students for their first time in front of a patient. The more your simulation technique of choice resembles that moment, the more comfortable your students will feel. In a recent study using mixed reality (MR) hologram patients, students were more engaged with the experience because they saw the "patient" as a real person for whom they needed to care, one student even feeling "panicky" when the simulated patient started to deteriorate. That kind of investment in the situation helps students prepare for the stress of real-life clinical experience.



Realism in Communication

Nurses in most settings work as part of a multidisciplinary team. Yet, little is often done during coursework to teach students how to align terminology and diagnoses across disciplines.

With [research](#) showing the briefing plays a major role in the effectiveness of simulation as well, it's vitally important to plan for students to have a seamless, thorough knowledge of what's expected during simulation exercises. It's also key that the simulation methods encourage students to push themselves and each other toward making conclusions and allowing the instructor to slip into a facilitator role, rather than letting the teacher supply answers as a knee-jerk response.

For a more detailed look at how MR can help students master clinical reasoning, click [here](#).