

# Simulation based learning

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The word 'simulation' is almost a misnomer. When it's considered in medical education terms, many interpret it to mean the use of high fidelity manikins with all their associated extras. This is the first mistake! There are multiple manikins gathering dust in cupboards having been purchased by well-intentioned trainers who mistakenly thought that an expensive piece of equipment and a room was all you needed to set up with. Manikins and task trainers are important but they are just props to support the learning experience and this word [experience] is key. What we want to deliver is experiential learning using all available resources and to do so in a safe and controlled environment.

The key driver for this learning is patient safety. We teach and analyse both technical and non-technical skills. Our focus is on teamwork and performance analysis, particularly in stressful situations. This focus has informed a successful research output using a number of modern teaching techniques. One of these is video performance analysis software allowing for better skills acquisition and retention. Further tools we use are the introduction of SAFMED cards that develop rapid learning and knowledge retention. We also are about to start using sensors on students to analyse their positions during a team-based approach during a cardiac arrest.

We are currently collaborating with the Departments of Education and Psychology at Queens to deliver research output on the themes stated above.

The Clinical Skills Education Centre in QUB offers fantastic facilities, equipment and software and most importantly skilled staff, providing a valuable setting for testing hypotheses about how students learn both technical and non-technical skills. There is great potential for seeking evidence for what we do every day as medical educators, and for testing imaginative and innovative means of delivering teaching and assessing learning. The ultimate focus is enhancement of the quality of experience of students, through their participation in research as participants or co-investigators, but also ultimately from the fruits of research findings. If you are interested in developing an idea for a project or are looking for any further information on current projects relating to the simulation theme please get in touch.

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