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Using Simulation pedagogy in nursing to enhance learning through assessment

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Engagement with professional practice learning introduced through simulation, which includes peer and formative assessment and builds towards summative assessment in clinical practice, is central to the undergraduate nursing curriculum at UWE and at many higher education institutions across the world. This approach enriches the student experience and, as health care and the patient population continue to change and evolve, enables students to develop an adaptive and critical understanding of nursing (Berragan, 2014). These features are not just additional ways of learning nursing and developing fundamental nursing skills; they are ways of knowing nursing (Berragan, 1998). There is real potential for assessment through simulation to help students to understand the key features of nursing and learn to deliver skilled, integrated and compassionate care to their patients.

This presentation focuses upon the opportunities provided through simulation to enhance learning through assessment. Simulation supports opportunities for authentic assessment of the fundamental skills of nursing (Wiggins, 1989; Walters, 2014). The notion that assessment tasks should acknowledge and engage with the ways in which knowledge and skills are used in authentic settings is important (Boud, 2007). Assessment has a major influence upon learning, directing attention to areas of significance, acting as an incentive for learning and having a powerful effect upon students' approaches to their learning (Boud and Falchikov, 2007). Assessment also guides students, emphasizing what they can and cannot succeed in doing (Boud, 2007). It is this aspect of simulation that we wish to highlight. Our current research explores undergraduate nursing students' simulation experiences, and their descriptions of simulation during feedback, debriefing and formative assessment. It also highlights the benefits of peer assessment within the simulation learning environment as nursing students work together to demonstrate, describe and reflect upon their learning.

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