

Simulation Based Medical Education (SBME)

“No patients were harmed in making of this physician”
Darla Brown as a slogan of a new skills laboratory

It is no secret that the patients are getting abhorrent to be demonstrated as a model of disease in the traditional bed side teaching. Once revered concept of bed side teaching has now become archaic and anachronistic in the present context of cognitive learning as patients are not obliged to pay and play guinea pigs for the white-coat learners. Procedures involving perineal exposures, breast, digital vaginal and rectal examinations are highly embarrassing and are willy nilly tolerated by the patients if done by the treating doctors but surely, they find it contemptible and unacceptable for the teaching purpose.

However, like all other fields, the medical trainees also need to acquire clinical, diagnostic and other skills. Due to the aforesaid reasons the necessity of the skills lab was felt where Simulation Based Medical Education (SMBE) can be carried out without patients suffering.

The first mannequin type simulator was developed around 1950. Recently, varieties of mannequins have been developed. Resusci Anni (Laerdal, Norway), advanced skills trainer are available to teach students BLS (Basic Life Support), ALS (Advanced Life Support), endotracheal intubation, cardiac defibrillators. Training models are also available for laproscopic surgery, cardiovascular intervention and other procedures.

Advanced software's are now available which are controlled by computers and these come under the category of screen based virtual reality simulators. The greater advantage of simulation based learning is that it offers training to learners without harm to the patient. An error by learner is not going to do any harm. A learner can fail a procedure, try it repeatedly till he masters it. However, the disadvantage of SBME is that it requires gnomonic skill on the part of the trainer to master specially the advanced mannequins and simulators.

Further, it must be remembered that “simulation is not reality”. So when opportunity permits, gaining experience on patients is an unsurpassable experience.

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