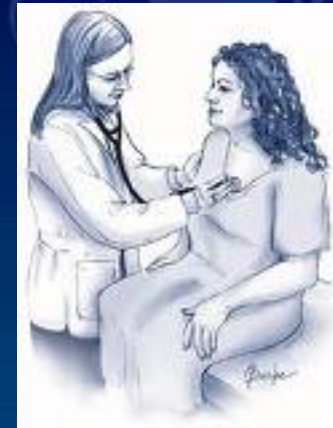


Training of Simulated Patients across Scottish Medical Schools: Variation and Commonalities of Practice.

Bryan Allan

What is a Simulated Patient?

- A simulated patient (SP) is someone who has been trained to portray characteristics of a real patient for teaching and assessment purposes.



History of Simulated Patients

- First devised by Howard Barrows in 1963.
- Harming the profession with "actors".
- "Hollywood Invades" University of Southern California Medical School.
- "Scantily clad models are making life a little more interesting" for the USC medical students.

Simulated Patients in the UK

- In use for the last 30 years.
- Initially, mainly used within medical education with the implementation of OSCEs by Harden et al.
- Used in all areas of healthcare education and also used in other professional groups e.g. vets and law.

Simulated Patients in Scotland

- Been in use for last 13 years.
- 3 medical schools use volunteers.
- 1 medical school pays their SPs.
- 1 medical school uses both actors and volunteers.

Aims

- To explore what training a newly recruited SP should receive.
- To explore what ongoing training if any is needed.
- To examine what SPs themselves felt about the training they received.
- To examine what SPs believe should be included in a training programme.

Scope of Study

- University of Aberdeen
- University of Dundee
- University of Edinburgh
- University of Glasgow
- University of St Andrews

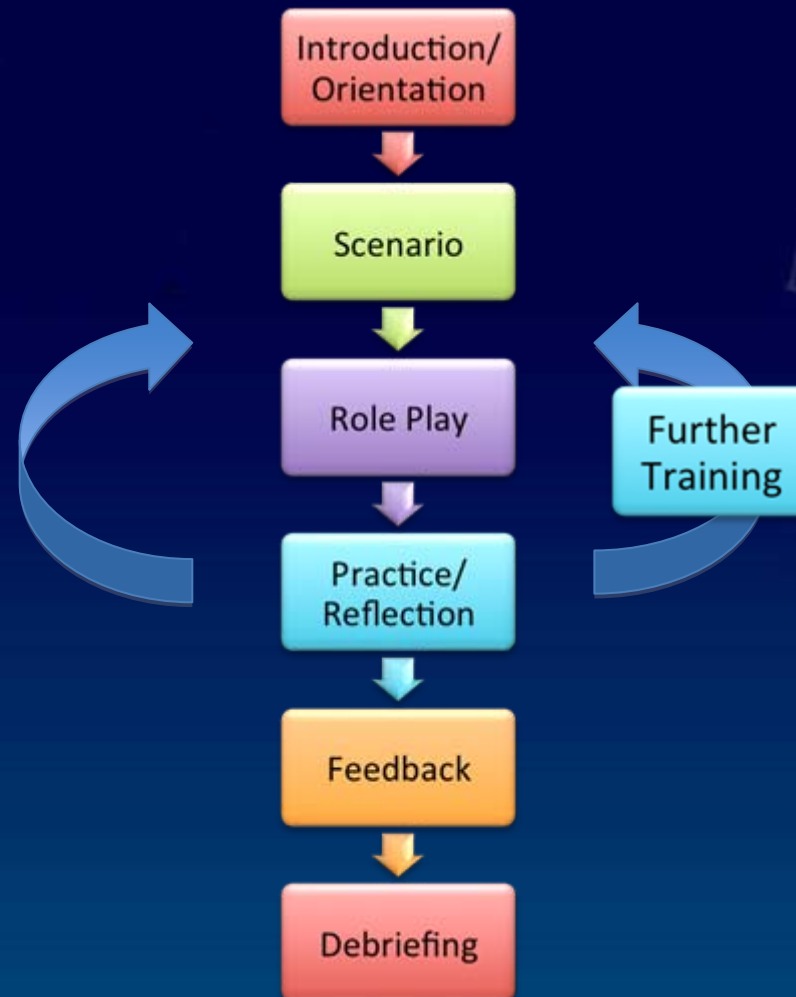
Methods

- Face to face semi-structured interviews with SP Trainers in each medical school.
- Focus groups with groups of 3 SPs (1 new SP, 1 long term and 1 medium term SP) from each medical school.

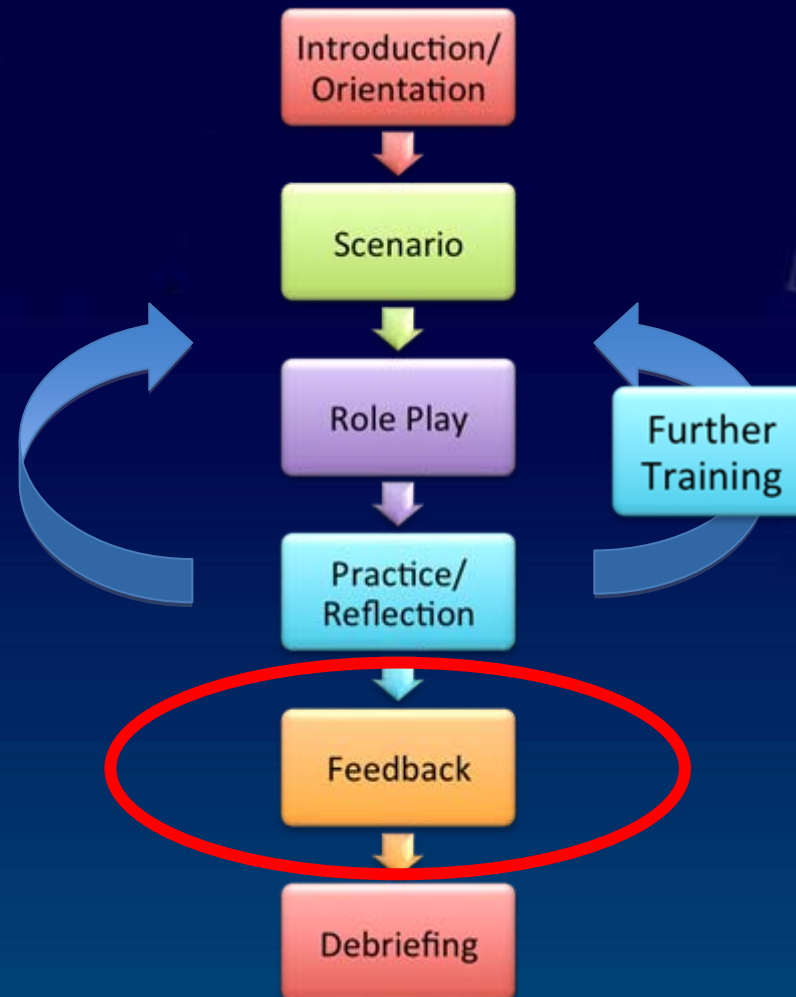
Data Analysis

- Focus groups and SP trainer interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed.
- Transcripts were anonymised to maintain SP, SP trainer and SP programme confidentiality.
- Commonalities of phrases in the transcripts were coded into themes using qualitative data analysis software NVivo.

Model of Simulated Patient Training



Model of Simulated Patient Training



Feedback to Students - Trainer's Perspective

- All Trainers stated that they provide training on how to give feedback to students.
- 4 SP trainers questioned stated that there were difficulties in getting some SPs to feedback effectively to a student.



Feedback to Students - SP's Perspective

- SPs also highlighted issues with feedback, with all saying that they had received training on feedback; however 50% of SPs still were not comfortable about giving feedback to students.
- There were issues with tutors when giving feedback: “it depends on which tutor you’re with how much feedback if any you give”.

Feedback to Students - Student's Perspective

From the literature:

- Students value feedback in the curriculum.
- Students often complain that they don't get enough feedback.
- Often rated low in national student survey.
- Feedback from the SP's perspective valuable tool in communication skills teaching.

Feedback – what are the difficulties?

- SPs coming out of role to give feedback.
- SPs lecturing to students.
- SPs giving feedback that opposes the tutor's feedback.

Feedback – what are the difficulties?

- Giving feedback to students is difficult.
- Hard to remember what “student said when concentrating on role”
- “Hard, especially in a new scenario”
- Difficult to give positive feedback to a student when student has performed badly.

SPs' Comments on Giving Feedback

- The tutors are wanting more in-depth feedback....not just I was comfortable, or their manner was.... They want to know what is good about it, what troubled you.....
- Sometimes you're thinking so much about the feedback you're not thinking about the scenario.

SPs' Comments on Giving Feedback

- No. I'm not the expert. I'm just the patient
- Sometimes unfortunately a student was a complete disaster....and you don't wanna say that to them.... you don't want them to go away and thinking I'm rubbish, I'm horrible... always try and find the positive and try and make the negative not as negative as it could be.....

Methods of Feedback

- 2 SP Programmes provide verbal feedback.
- 2 SP Programmes provide written feedback.
- 1 SP Programme provides both verbal and written feedback.



Model of Feedback

- Sandwich model of Feedback.
- Pendleton's Rules of Feedback.
- SETGO Model of Feedback.
- Checklist feedback.



Training to give Feedback

- Literature suggests training lasts anything from 20 min – 40 hours.
- Usually taught using pre-recorded interviews or practising with SP Trainers.
- Some studies suggest that SPs give more genuine feedback if they have been trained using a scenario that the SP has written than a faculty-written one.

Closing the Feedback Loop

- Feedback to SPs on giving feedback.
- Any feedback to students is valuable in whichever shape or form it comes packaged.

Summary

- Variation in how we train SPs to give feedback should be encouraged so that it meets local demand.
- Only through sharing our experiences and practice can we improve how our SPs give feedback.



Any Questions?

