

Cost-Effective Mobile Academic Simulation Boosts Student Competency and Curriculum Effectiveness



THE PROBLEM

For over a decade, Florida State University (FSU) College of Medicine has used Education Management Solutions' (EMS) enterprise simulation management solution to evaluate student and resident competency. Instructors and students traveled to the main campus each year to conduct and participate in OSCEs. Although this centralized system works well for main campus faculty and those students in the early years of training, there were disadvantages for those in the remote settings. "Getting everyone to the main campus was quite a challenge," comments Debra Danforth, MS, ARNP, FAANP, Associate Professor and Director of the Charlotte E. Maguire, MD and TMH Clinical Learning Center of FSU. "Not only did we have to coordinate many schedules, but remote faculty were away from the clinical setting for several days. That can be a huge hardship for healthcare delivery in the community."

Around 120 medical students were also required to leave the clinical setting and journey to the main campus for the evaluation process. Besides the investment of time and the disruption at the clinical setting, it was expensive to transport and house these students each year.



THE SOLUTION

"An interesting finding was that students act differently in the decentralized program than they do in the centralized simulations. They seem more serious about the experience when it is connected to their current clinical setting and involves their current clerkship faculty," says Danforth. "We set up the simulation in one of the actual clinic rooms used by the students when dealing with 'real' patients. They are in the same environment using familiar equipment. This can be very reassuring, and more fully simulates a true clinical experience."

Julie DeCesare, MD, Obstetrics and Gynecology Residency Program Director and Associate Professor, agrees that mobile simulation offers many advantages. DeCesare teaches resident physicians in obstetrics and gynecology in Pensacola, FL, a three-hour drive from FSU COM's main campus in Tallahassee. "We work with a disadvantaged patient population in a very busy practice. Mobile simulation allows us continuity with patient care while evaluating and training residents in the specialty," she says.



THE RESULTS

FSU COM has been using EMS' SIMULATIONiQ Enterprise technology at its central campus in Tallahassee for more than 10 years. The addition of SIMULATIONiQ Mobile six years ago has expedited performance-based assessment in the school's numerous remote locations. "We saved over \$80,000 in our first year with the mobile program. This has increased enthusiasm for mobile academic simulation," says Danforth.

Besides the savings, the mobile simulation process also contributed to changes to the curriculum involving domestic violence. "[It was evident that] our OB/GYN residents did not do well in the simulation. They didn't seem to understand the reporting laws or the screenings necessary when domestic violence may be present," says DeCesare. This resulted in a review of FSU's current curriculum to strengthen the program on this competency.

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