Developing a multidisciplinary SIM Laboratory within the School of Health Sciences

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Developing a multidisciplinary SIM Laboratory within the School of Health Sciences.


Theme: Workplace culture and teamwork

AIMS: To develop a multidisciplinary simulation laboratory and team for the School of Health Sciences and to further embed simulation experiences within the curricula.

BACKGROUND: The School of Health Sciences is a diverse school that provides several professionally accredited programs and many disciplines, including nutrition and dietetics, exercise rehabilitation, public health, population health, medical science, occupational health and safety (OHS) and occupational hygiene (OHP). While simulation has been used for some disciplines in the form of case studies, role plays and objective structured clinical examinations, there has not been a dedicated space to conduct regular simulations in a combined setting or a multidisciplinary team approach to simulation development. Academic staff regularly booked various available rooms to conduct OSCEs on such topics as anthropometry, fitness testing and dietary counselling.

METHODS: A working party began in early 2012 to plan for refurbishment of a recently vacated space. A further task was to consider strategies to further embed simulation opportunities for students. Some funding was available to start refurbishment. The space was cleaned and cleared of unwanted furniture, before some was rearranged to make the area functional. It was decided that the space would be used for a session and feedback sought so funding would be spent only after activities and the layout had been trialled. An equipment list and desired floor plan was then drawn and costed.

RESULTS: The plans were in excess of funding, so revised plans incorporated new furniture, new flooring, painting, partitions, a data projector and video recording capability, but no structural changes. The revised floor plan was flexible enough that two consult rooms could become five, while still having space for exercise science or exercise rehabilitation testing and/or treatment, or a focus group or small group education occurring in the other half of the laboratory. The laboratory has been booked heavily for this year and some disciplines have increased simulation experiences; realising the benefit of all simulations being able to be conducted in the same space.

CONCLUSIONS: The development of our simulation laboratory has allowed collaboration between disciplines while improving the laboratory. Future funding will further improve facilities and inter-professional simulation opportunities for our students.