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Perceptions of Experiencing Simulated Death

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UPMC
HEALTH SYSTEM

INTRODUCTION

During a medical simulation scenario the appropriate physiological response may be for the simulator to “die”.

There has been recent debate about simulated death causing an untoward experience for the learner, or creating an impediment to accomplishing the learning objectives. Largely they have been anecdotal discussions amongst simulation based educators.

We queried groups of students participating in simulation based training programs about their perceptions of experiencing a simulated death.

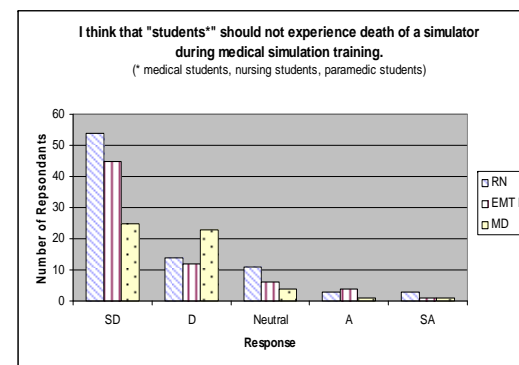
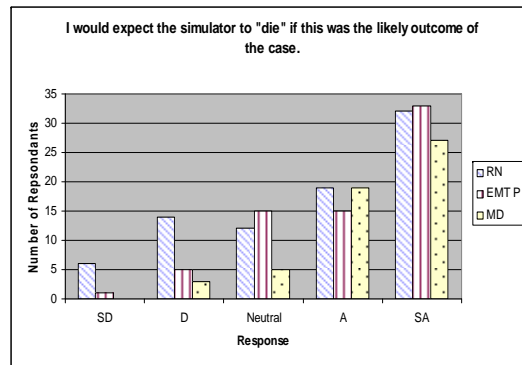
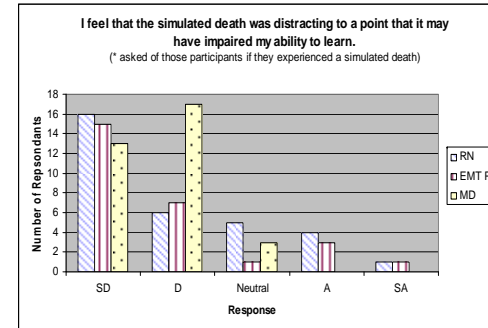
METHODS

- Quality assurance surveys
- Between April and November 2004
- 63 physicians
- 175 Air Medical Crew (AMC) members
 - 67 Paramedics 86 Nurses
- Physician course was in difficult airway management
- AMC course had scenarios involving medical decision making as well as difficult airway management
- Both groups were attending mandatory courses
- Five point Likert style questions
- 0 representing “strongly disagree” and 4 representing “strongly agree”
- Participants were invited to enter free text comments about the subject

RESULTS

- 62 (98%) physicians completed the survey
 - 32 (60%) residents
 - 22 (40%) faculty
- 162 (87%) AMC completed the survey
 - 86 (53%) Nurses and
 - 67 (43%) paramedics
 - 6 (4%) unknown [excluded]

Question Topic	SD-0 D-1 N-2 A-3 SA-4		
	Physicians	Nurses	Paramedics
Death of the simulator during training			
Was experienced during the course	33 (61%)	34 (42%)	27 (41%)
and it impaired the ability to learn	1 (IQR:0-1)	0.5 (IQR:0-2)	0 (IQR:0-1)
and likely would have correlated to actual patient death and/or permanent disability	3 (IQR:2-3)	1.5 (IQR:0.8-2)	1 (IQR:0-2.5)
Would be expected by the trainee if that was the likely outcome	3.5 (IQR:3-4)	3 (IQR:2-4)	3 (IQR:2-4)
May cause a future reluctance to participate in simulation training	0 (IQR:0-1)	0 (IQR:0-1)	0 (IQR:0-1)
Is always inappropriate regardless of management	0 (IQR:0-1)	0 (IQR:0-1)	0 (IQR:0-1)
Is part of the power of simulation based education	3 (IQR:3-4)	3 (IQR:2-4)	4 (IQR:2-4)
Should be avoided in courses for medical, nursing and paramedic students	1 (IQR:0-1)	0 (IQR:0-1)	0 (IQR:0-1)
Should be disclosed as a specific possibility during the course orientation	1 (IQR:0-2)	1 (IQR:0-2)	1 (IQR:0-2)
The debriefing style would be important to how I would feel about the death	***	2 (IQR:2-4)	3 (IQR:2-4)



CONCLUSIONS

- Participants disagreed that simulated death was distracting to the learning environment
- Participants strongly disagreed that students in their respective fields should be exempted from simulated death
- Participants strongly disagreed that experiencing simulated death would create a reluctance to participate in further simulation training
- Participants disagreed that a separate disclosure about the possibility of simulated death was necessary