

Title: The Use of “Patchwork Text” Written Assignments Encourage Reflective Practice in a Simulation-based Resuscitation Curriculum.

Authors: Mirna Attalla, Timothy Chaplin

Background: Learners are actively engaged if they are involved in their assessment process. Simulated learning provides a safe environment to encourage reflective practice. The Patchwork Text (PT) assignment format encourages self-assessment and demonstration of reflective practice. The aim of this study was to assess the quality of self assessment after the implementation of assigned written reflections.

Methods: 50 junior residents participated in the Nightmares Course—a multidisciplinary simulation-based curriculum for training in resuscitation. Participants completed a pre-course questionnaire to identify their learning goals. 25 residents were allocated to the Patchwork Text group and 25 were allocated to the control group. The PT group were assigned written reflections based on their identified learning goals. After completing the course, participants completed a survey to provide their self-assessment. A thematic analysis was conducted to identify differences in the number and quality of themes that emerged. The PT group also completed a survey regarding the impact of the assignments.

Results: In the PT group, the major themes that emerged regarding leadership skills included “Communication Skills”, “Approachability” and “Decisiveness”. For teamwork skills, the major themes included “Adaptability,” “Engaging in Role,” and “Communication Skills.” In the control group, the major theme that emerged for both leadership and teamwork skills was “Communication Skills”. 21 (84%) of PT participants indicated that the assignments helped achieve their personal learning goals and 16 (64%) found that it augmented their feedback during their post-simulation debrief. The benefits that the PT group identified included encouraging reflective practice and clear identification of and focus on learning goals. 18 (72%) of the PT group recommended including written reflection for the future Nightmares Course.

Conclusions: The Patchwork Text assignment format can be used to encourage reflective practice and higher quality of self-assessment regarding the development of teamwork and communication skills in simulation-based learning of resuscitation.