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Thoughts from the CEO of UAB Health System

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Simulation: Coming to a Location Near You

February 9, 2015 By [admin](#) [Leave a Comment](#)



Can imitating reality:

- **Improve quality of care?**
- **Reduce costs?**
- **Improve patient satisfaction?**
- **Train better medical professionals?**
- **Increase interprofessional teamwork?**

The answer is YES to all of the above!

UAB has been involved in simulation for many years, and last year we made a commitment to not only be involved but also be a leader in what is rapidly becoming a major part of clinical care, research, and education. UAB established the UAB Office of Interprofessional Simulation to coordinate and grow all of our efforts on campus, and Dr. Marjorie Lee White was appointed Vice President of Clinical Simulation for UAB Health System. She will direct an office which expands simulation across UAB

Medicine for education, research, and clinical care. In this role, she is partnering with UAB's schools of Nursing, Public Health, Dentistry, Optometry, Medicine, and Health Professions.

The Institute of Medicine defines simulation as:

The act of imitating a situation or a process through something analogous. Examples include using an actor to play a patient, a computerized mannequin to imitate the behavior of a patient, a computer program to imitate a case scenario and an animation to mimic the spread of an infectious disease in a population. (2004)

It is well known that high-reliability organizations such as those in the airline and nuclear power industries devote a substantial portion of their training resources to practice in simulated settings. About 20 years ago, select academic medical centers (AMCs) around the world began using "intelligent" mannequins to train students and staff. Here at UAB, we are poised to expand our use of these mannequins and standardized patients using simulation, and we want this to be a key component in our quest to be the Preferred AMC of the 21st Century.

There are many benefits to using simulation in health care. It blends simulated and real working environments to provide training; and takes the benefits of safety and documented improvements in clinical care from the lab to the patient care setting. Real clinical teams don't have to leave their work environments; they can problem solve in their own clinical settings. We also hope to evaluate the physical spaces and high-risk processes of care delivery with an eye toward identifying hazards. (The goal is to identify components about the environment of care which may be a set-up for hazards or latent errors.) This provides an opportunity to proactively address them. Finally, we want to focus on both rare and high-risk events to level the playing field for individuals, teams, and, most importantly, our patients.

Proving its effectiveness, the Office of Interprofessional Simulation played a critical role in our preparation for Ebola. Increasing healthcare simulations will demonstrate to all that we are truly putting UAB's values into action. It will allow us to change our culture to one where we've practiced patient care perfectly and are ready to deliver it 24/7/365.

Our vision is for UAB to be a leader in everything simulation. I dream of us establishing "Blazer Hospital" – a simulation center which would serve UAB Medicine, provide a teaching platform for all of UAB, support simulation in our associate and affiliate hospitals (as well as others) throughout the state, and provide support to EMS and other community services.

You can be sure that soon, simulation will be coming to a location near you!



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