Elaine Brooks Harwood, MSN, RN, FNP-BC
Clinical Assistant Professor
School of Nursing
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, NC
United States of America

Address:
CB 7460 Carrington Hall
Room 513  Adult and Geriatric Health
School of Nursing
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, NC  27599

Email: harwood@email.unc.edu

Telephone:
Office: (919) 843-8548
Fax: (919) 929-2011
Cell: (919) 824-1486

Contact: Elaine Brooks Harwood

Abstract content area:
Integrating simulation and other technologies into geriatric nursing curriculum
Teaching Geriatric Assessment using Simulation

Elaine Brooks Harwood, MSN, RN, FNP-BC
Clinical Assistant Professor
School of Nursing
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, NC

Abstract

There is a wide range of variability in the process of aging, making it important to distinguish between normal aging and illness. An array of tools is available to healthcare providers to support assessment of geriatric patients. To provide experience with geriatric assessment for nurse practitioner (NP) students, a simulation was developed that integrates multiple educational strategies, includes collaboration between first- and second-year NP students, and provides simulated practice in geriatric assessment. This presentation describes the geriatric assessment simulation, its development, and learning strategies used in it.

Using teams of second-year Adult Nurse Practitioner (ANP) students as facilitators and actors who play the role of geriatric patients, first-year nurse practitioner students in their first clinical course are divided into groups and asked to complete a functional assessment on the patient who is being played by an ANP student. Geriatric cases are distributed to the ANP student groups three weeks prior to the clinical laboratory experience. The ANP students collaborate on the case they are assigned and determine which assessment tools would be appropriately utilized with their “patient” in a clinical setting. Preparation assignments for the first-year students include the AJN How to Try This series, the American Geriatric Society’s Geriatric Review Syllabus on Assessment of the Older Adult, and assigned textbook readings.

The ANP student facilitator role is to maintain the head-to-toe assessment process; guide effective communication with the geriatric patient; make details of the patient’s history, physical and diagnostic results available upon request from the group; and distribute copies of various assessment tools to the group when appropriate.

Following a thorough assessment, the facilitator and student actor provide a comprehensive review of the case, providing feedback on inconsistencies in the history and physical process, signs of deficits or illness that were overlooked, assessment tools that would have been appropriately used in this case, and recommendations for further learning and skill development in the assessment of geriatric patients.

Feedback from both student groups has been positive. Students at both levels indicated they appreciated the opportunity to analyze situations commonly seen in their precepted clinical experience.

Keywords: geriatric, assessment, simulation, function