

Using Simulation to Enhance First Year Medical Students Clinical Approach to Transgender Persons

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Medical education curriculum must include learning objectives regarding the importance of meeting health care needs of underserved populations and developing core professional attributes to provide effective care in a multi-dimensionally diverse society. An educational activity related to the clinical approach to the Transgenders (TG) persons was introduced in the clinical skills course of the UPR-SOM. The objectives of this activity were: perform a comprehensive adult medical history to a TG patient; use effective communication skills displaying professionalism with sensitive patient information; and recognize personal and emotional challenges influencing the care of patient's reproductive/sexual health needs. Students (n=112) completed a module about health disparities. Afterwards, the students perform a comprehensive medical history to a transgender patient. A standardized patient simulated the script for the interaction. A professor facilitated the activity, guided students to use a non-judgmental language and discussed important aspects of a medical evaluation of a TG patient. Finally, students completed a self-reflection exercise. Students emphasized that the activity was very helpful and rewarding and the most important point learned was how to provide an emphatic and respectful care to the TG persons. Simulation is a valuable strategy to educate medical students about health care needs of the underserved populations.