

PMH Simulation Reflection

Please reflect on your experiences in simulation this week and reply to each item below. You may add anything else you wish. Submissions should be a **minimum** of 350 words total.

- Describe your feelings about your participation in the simulations this week.
I enjoyed this SIM because it was a chance to see several types of disorders in one clinical setting. I was able to be the nurse twice and the patient once. I believe that it was beneficial to participate in both because it gives us the opportunity to see both sides perspectives
- How did it go compared to what you expected it to be like?
I was expecting to participate in more medical interventions, but I later learned that these scenarios incorporated both. This SIM made me realize that yes physical health is important, but mental health can greatly impact one's physical health.
- What went well?
I think our group did an excellent job of treating the emotions behind the patient and remaining calm. These scenarios were hard because we had to adapt accordingly to rapidly changing emotions. I believe that we all remained calm, spoke confidently, and put the emotional and physical well-being of the patient as a priority.
- What could have gone better?
I believe that I could have done a better job at making the patient with Schizophrenia feel safe AND not dismiss her feelings. It is difficult to bring the patient to reality, while not making the patient feel "crazy", but I am still trying to learn how to communicate therapeutically without making the patient think that I don't believe her. I understand that the voices/ people are not real to me, but this patient fully believes that they are, so trying to reorient the patient to reality is extremely challenging. For example, the patient believed that she was pregnant and the "demon" stole her child from her. However, this was not reality. I told the patient, "Ma'am you were never pregnant and never have been pregnant." Was this the right comment to make considering she fully believed that she was pregnant? Did I sound insensitive? I'm still not sure of that answer, but I will do my best moving forward to ensure that I am as kind and understanding as possible in all situations.
- Reflect on the scenario in which you were in the role of the patient or family member. How did that experience affect you?
I played the role of Tessa, a 24 y/o female with a personality disorder. This was challenging because I could not imagine having to cope with several emotions so quickly. It was difficult trying to handle being sad, angry, and happy all within 15 minutes of each other. I could not imagine the mental and emotional torment this puts on a patient. It was especially difficult because Tessa is only a year older than me. I was trying to relate to her in the best way that I could while making the scenarios as real life as possible, but as a person who has mental health, it was hard to imagine living with a mental health issue on an everyday basis. Overall, I was thankful for the experience because it gave me the opportunity to put myself in their shoes.
- How did this week impact the way you feel about your ability to use therapeutic communication?
I have come to find out this week that I have more empathy than I give myself credit for. I have always been an empathetic person, but this week made me realize that I can be empathetic to those I don't know too. We were taught last week that empathy is one of the most therapeutic tools that can be used in a clinical setting, but it wasn't until this week that I recognized the impact that it truly makes on a person.

- Did this week change the way you think about mental health? If so, how?

This week did change the way I feel about mental health and particularly the example used by Professor Harrison about “vomiting”. Mental health issues are no different than that of a patient vomiting; we don’t get angry at a patient for vomiting, we know they can’t control it, and we do our best to stop the vomiting. This is the same as taking care of someone with mental health issues.

- How will you use the knowledge gained from this experience in your practice as a registered nurse?

As previously stated, the comparison between vomiting and mental health issues really resonated with me. Mental health is a growing issue in the US and needs to be treated the same as any other physical health condition. Even though I have no intention of working in psychiatry, mental health (especially anxiety) is something that every person deals with. We as nurses are supposed to treat the individual, that includes both mental and physical health. We have learned that physical health impacts mental health, just as mental health impacts physical health. I will take this week’s experience and ensure that both the physical AND mental well-being of my patients are recognized.