

Poverty Simulation insights

Instructions: Reflect on the simulation and answer all of the following questions related to struggles you might have encountered during the simulation.

1. What were your initial thoughts and emotions during the simulation, and how did they change as the activity progressed?

During the simulation, I was very stressed in the beginning. This was hard trying to come up with the money to pay bills and get food in the first week. I even sold items that our family owned to pay for bus tickets to apply for benefits. Later on in the simulation it was easier to pay for everything and had a lot of bus tickets to use. My kids in the simulation helped me get money and tickets as well.

2. How did the limited resources and financial constraints impact your decision-making? Were there any moments where you felt particularly overwhelmed or stressed?

The limited resources and financial constraints impacted my decision making by deciding what the priority was. I had to decide between getting around places and strategically use my tickets to get to certain places. I would say if it was real life, I would have been extremely overwhelmed, there was stress but nothing like it would be if my life really depended on it.

3. How did the simulation change your perspective on the daily struggles of individuals and families living in poverty?

This simulation changes my perspective on daily struggles by seeing what people really have to go through. I personally have not had to experience this and seeing it happen really put it in perspective that some families cannot afford everyday things like some of us do.

4. What challenges did you face in balancing necessities like housing, food, healthcare, and emergencies with limited income?

The challenges I had to face when balancing everything was hard because I was a single mom and doing everything on my own. I had to make sure I had time to get to all the places I needed and have the money to pay for it all by myself. I also had to figure out how to support two kids alone.

5. How did the stress of living in poverty affect your ability to think clearly, plan ahead, or manage crises?

It was difficult to think clearly about everything going on and all the tasks I needed to complete in time. There was no time to plan ahead and had to run into issues. Where there were crises, I had to think quickly and get everything done.

6. In your future role as a healthcare provider, how might understanding the impact of poverty influence your approach to patient care?

In the future, I will think to provide all the help I can to a patient that is dealing with poverty. I will make sure to show empathy and make sure they know I am going to do the best I can to help them. Everyone should get proper care regardless of their financial status.

7. What aspects of the simulation most surprised or impacted you? Were there situations that you had not considered prior to the exercise?

The thing that impacted me the most during the simulation and I did not expect was how my family was into drug dealing and that's how I was paying the bills and getting everything we needed. I personally would not turn to this in real life, but it did put it into perspective how some people really use that as their way to get money.

8. How do you think poverty influences a person's physical and mental health? How can healthcare professionals address these challenges?

Poverty can influence a person's way of thinking, such as being upset and end up having depression. This can go deeper into suicidal thoughts and other behaviors that impact their mental health. It can also cause a person to not have any motivation and can be physically draining for them. Healthcare professionals can address these challenges by helping the person get what they need. For example, they could see if there are any groups the person could attend that are free or any free therapy options. Medication can help the person also, but could be an issue for them to pay for it.

9. What role do you think empathy plays in delivering effective healthcare to individuals facing poverty? How can you cultivate this in your practice?

Empathy plays a huge role in delivering effective healthcare to people in poverty. It can change how a person is feeling and let them know that someone is there for them and cares. I can use this in my practice by showing individuals that I am there to listen if they need to talk and going to help them the best I can.

10. Reflect on the limitations of the simulation itself. How does this exercise compare to real-life experiences of poverty? What additional factors might affect those living in poverty?

The limitations that this simulation had was that it was difficult to feel like it was real life. Being in a class room with tables set up made it easy to know it was not real life when going through it. The places set up and starting out with little money did help me realize that I had to figure out a way to get through everything. Other factors that might affect those living in poverty include not being able to afford transportation, not getting the job they need, financial issues, and home issues.