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4 Putting The Fun Back in Teaching and Learning: A SIM Murder Mystery to Explore an EM Physician's Role as a Good Neighbor

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Introduction: Instructor burnout and learner boredom can curtail engagement in educational activities and negatively impact learning. Although simulation is conducive to active learning, even this can become routine, particularly for the instructors due to the inherent repetition.

Learning Objective:

1. Improve active engagement of faculty and learners.
2. Prepare learners to respond in a non-traditional practice environment to household accidents/illnesses.
3. Understand the legal responsibilities, local resources, and liability one faces as a physician acting outside the workplace.

Curricular Design: Learners (EM residents, pharmacy residents and medical students) participated in a 6-station sim session working in teams to manage a grill explosion, drowning, fall down stairs, stab wound, ingestion and a neighbor with chest pain refusing transport. Debriefings included discussion of Good Samaritan laws, scene safety, at home stabilization and reinforced didactics covering EMTALA and EMS.

As an added twist, learners were asked to solve a murder mystery as some of these injuries were not accidents! Physical clues were scattered throughout the house, verbal clues were embedded in the scenario history and written clues were provided. Teams were given a game card to organize clues and figure out “who did it”.

This five-hour sim session was conducted in a faculty members home using low fidelity mannequins and faculty acting as neighbors/victims. Each station was proctored by a faculty member tasked with conducting a debrief focused on the educational objectives for the case.

This activity was so realistic that several dog walkers attempted to call 911. We recommend placing “training in progress” warnings in the yard.

Impact: The faculty and residents provided session feedback that was overwhelmingly positive – learners were paying attention and the faculty was engaged in the fun. This training session has received institutional attention that has highlighted the creativity and engagement of our faculty.



Image 1.



Image 2.