UC Irvine

Western Journal of Emergency Medicine: Integrating Emergency Care with Population Health

Title

A Novel Experiential Learning Curriculum for Rural Emergency Medicine Training

Permalink

https://escholarship.org/uc/item/6z21v9fb

Journal

Western Journal of Emergency Medicine: Integrating Emergency Care with Population Health, 27(2.1)

ISSN

1936-900X

Authors

Brown, William
Caputo, Nick
Justice, Joshua
et al.

Publication Date

2026-03-27

DOI

10.5811/westjem.64199

Copyright Information

This work is made available under the terms of a Creative Commons Attribution License, available at https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

eScholarship.org Powered by the California Digital Library
University of California

29 A Novel Experiential Learning Curriculum for Rural Emergency Medicine Training

William Brown, Nick Caputo, Joshua Justice, Craig Sheedy, Carmen Wolfe

Introduction: Rural emergency medicine (EM) is a broad designation covering practice settings with low-density populations and restricted resource access. With nearly 25% of Americans living in a rural setting, this population can experience both common emergency ailments as well as specific occupational illnesses and injuries. Given that most EM residency programs are in urban or suburban areas, there may be lower familiarity with management of rural emergencies. The implementation of an experiential learning session designed for emergency medicine residents to learn about rural emergencies could provide valuable education they would not otherwise obtain in their typical clinical training settings.

Educational Objective: Increase resident knowledge and confidence in the management of emergencies occurring in rural settings

Curricular Design: This experiential learning day was administered on a farm in a rural region of Tennessee. In situ implementation allowed residents to become familiar with common equipment and geographic features that may be relevant to patient presentations. Residents were divided into six groups of mixed PGY levels and rotated through six educational stations in 35-minute intervals. Topics included crotalid envenomation, grain bin entrapment, farming-related toxidromes, horse-related traumatic injuries, tractor-related injuries, and pediatric rural drowning incidents. A variety of learning methods were utilized including mannequin-based simulation cases, traditional didactic lectures, oral board-style scenarios, and case-based written worksheets.

Effectiveness: An optional survey was conducted at the conclusion of the experiential learning session. All residents (100%) reported increased knowledge and confidence in managing rural emergencies. The majority (96%) preferred this educational activity over traditional classroom learning. Opportunities for future improvement include additional learning stations with expanded topic coverage.

30 The Benefits of Simwars in Second Year Medical Education

Daniel Patton, Peter Anthony, Lee Reagan, Todd Peterson

Introduction: SimWars is a competitive, simulation-based educational format proven to improve resident skills, confidence, and In-Training Exam performance. Despite these benefits, it has rarely been adapted from residency to undergraduate medical education. Second-year medical students, in particular, have limited exposure to emergency medicine (EM) principles and practices.

Objective: To create a competitive simulation event for MS2 students to gain exposure and confidence in treating emergent conditions.

Methods: A SimWars competition was implemented for second-year students at the UAB Heersink School of Medicine, timed immediately after didactics and prior to USMLE Step 1 preparation. The event began with an introductory presentation on effective communication, followed by three high-yield simulation scenarios aligned with Step 1 content. Emergency medicine residents utilized objective rubrics to score participants on accurate diagnosis, disease management, and communication. Each scenario concluded with a structured debrief focusing on core case facts and the application of EM principles to critically ill patients. Post-event, all participants completed a survey assessing changes in confidence and comfort in emergency settings.

Results: Results showed that most students reported increased confidence in diagnosing and managing acute illnesses

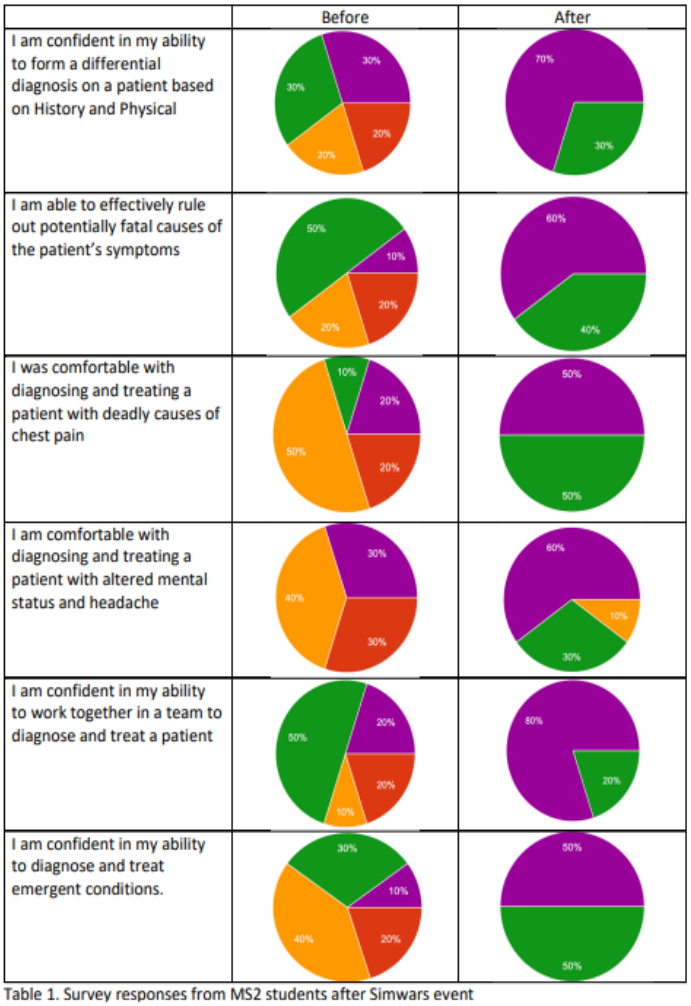

Table 1. Survey responses from MS2 students after Simwars event