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CONFERENCE REVIEW

SimTect Health 09 Simulation Conference - *Beyond Technical Skills*
Hilton on the Park, Melbourne, Australia. 7-11 September 2009

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This was the 5th SimTect conference which was held over three days with pre-conference and post-conference workshops. The pre-conference workshops commenced on Monday the 7th and included:

- **Obstetric Simulation: Make the Right Way the Easiest Way.** Dr Tim Draycott and Jo Crofts
- **Interprofessional Buy-In for Simulation: Why You Want It, How to Get It.** Associate Professor Suzie Kardong-Edgren
- **Patient Focused Simulations: The Role of Simulated Patients.** Professor Debra Nestel, Dr Cathy Haigh and Ms Tracy Morrison
- **Facilitating Learning Without the Use of Video Using the 'Pause and Discuss' Technique.** Ms Sue Ballinger-Doran, Ms Jennifer Hogan and Ms Tracey Nichols
- **Assessment of Non-Technical Skills**. Professor Rhona Flin;
- **Setting up a Simulation Centre.** Dr Michael Seropian, Ms Katie Walker and Mr Anthony Rowley
- **Creating, Recognizing and Using Learning Opportunities: Simulation Debriefing Workshop.** Dr Peter Dieckmann.

The post-conference workshop was the **Human Factors in Healthcare Symposium** and covered issues of how to decrease the human factors associated with healthcare provision. Post-conference visits to local simulation centres were also available to conference delegates.

The first two days started and ended with plenary sessions with the concurrent sessions in between. The last day was predominately concurrent sessions with free paper presentations. There were also 15 workshops and three roundtable discussions incorporated into the three days, these occurred during the concurrent session time.

There were four eminent international keynote speakers; *Professor Rhona Flin* from the University of Aberdeen, *Dr Peter Dieckmann* from the Danish Institute for Medical Simulation, Assistant *Professor Suzan Kardon-Edgren* from Washington State Uiversity, and *Dr Tim Draycott* from Southmead Hospital in Briston U.K. Eminent Australian keynote speakers included; *Professor Alison Lee* from the University Technology Sydney, and *Associate Professor Michael Buist* from the University of Tasmania.

The opening plenary, ***An Inconvenient Truth … Addressing Real World Issues with Simulation,*** was novel in that it employed an interactive video technique to engage audience

interaction in a simulated event with real world problems. The setting for the incident was a patient who, after undergoing surgery in a small hospital, began to deteriorate and required transfer to a larger hospital. The scenario, involving nurses, doctors and paramedics was delivered to the audience in sketches of approximately five minutes, followed by five minutes of interactive audience discussion which led to consensus of what should have happened. This entertaining and novel start to the plenary continued until the video was finished.

The pre-lunch concurrent sessions on Day One covered themes such as; **Non-Technical Skills** (NTS) **in Synthetic Learning Environments Project: Achievements and Lessons**; **Curriculum Design**; and **Undergraduates**. Three workshops were held on, *the simulation co-ordinator*; *an obstetric simulation unit*; and, *how to conduct simulation in situ*.

The post-lunch concurrent sessions covered themes such as; **Surgical simulators and Teams**. The four workshops covered scenario design, distributed simulation, simulation evaluation tools, and crisis management. Several of the free papers provided innovative ways of providing education to undergraduate paramedic students with limited class time and resources. Day one finished with a plenary session on **Non-Technical Skills: A Prescription for Safer Healthcare** by Rhona Flin and **Knowing More About it to Know More With it: Simulation and Research** by Peter Dieckmann. These two presentations enlightened the audience about non-technical skills, e.g. *communication amongst team members as a simulation* and, *research in simulation - where the simulation community should be heading*.

Day two began with a plenary session on **Obstetrics Simulation: What Works Where?** by Tim Draycott, and **The Rapid Response Team Paradox: "Why Doesn't Anyone Call for Help?"** by Michael Buist. The presentation by Michael Buist included some of his own experiences from a previous illness and the way in which his deteriorating condition was handled, even when there were policies in place that covered his problem. The presentation was interesting from a medical doctor who was on the other side of the healthcare system, the patient.

The pre-lunch concurrent sessions on day one covered themes such as; an **Obstetrics Panel, Inter-professional Education,** and **Poster Round.** The three workshops covered *simulation in rural areas*, *research methods*, and *simulation scheduling*. The post-lunch concurrent sessions covered themes such as; **Simulated Patients**, **Virtual Reality** and **Operations and Logistics.** The use of virtual reality as a part of simulation was interesting, and could be used to supplement undergraduate and in-service education with more 'real life' scenarios to assist decision making in low exposure rate incidents, e.g. severe and multi trauma. There was also a roundtable discussion on **Simulation Instructor Certification**. The two workshops covered *Teaching Undergraduates in Simulation* and *Writing for Publication*.

Day two finished with a plenary session on **A 50,000 Foot View of Simulation from a 12,500 Foot Kinda' Gal** by Suzie Kardong-Edgren and **Producing the New Health Professional: Inter-Professional Learning and 'Joined Up Practice'** by Alison Lee. The presentation by Alison Lee identified how simulation could better educate the "new" health professional to function better as a holistic healthcare team member.

Day three started with concurrent sessions on the themes of **Technical** and **Program Evaluation**. Another roundtable discussion was held on *Accreditation of Simulation Programs* and the workshops covering *Simulation using actors*, *Setting up an Audio-Visual System for Teaching*, and *Multisource Feedback and Reflection Tools for Simulation*.

The roundtable session, **Policy - What the Future Holds?** by Peter Carver (National Health

Workforce Taskforce) followed morning tea and was the final session before the conference closure. It was interesting to hear the amount of funding that has been earmarked for simulation over the next five years, and the direction the government is heading in with regard to simulation funding. The post-lunch time was allocated to local simulation centre visits.

The SimTect Health conference for 2010 will again be held in Melbourne, details of which will be available at a later date.

Conference Program