

# Comparison of Components Among Simulation Centers: An International Analysis

## Background and Review of the Literature

As simulation is incorporated into curriculum design and begins to be accepted as clinical experience, the need for a dedicated and planned simulation facility becomes a necessity. A review of the literature revealed few resources to assist in the planning of a simulation center as a new facility or repurposing of an existing location. The recent NCSBN simulation study has provided evidence that this methodology is as effective as traditional clinical, leading to further review of the policies regarding simulation. Simulation centers will need to be operationalized to provide this methodology. Existing centers may need expanded resources. Lazzara, et al (2014) published a list of eight factors that need to be considered in creating a successful simulation program: science, staff, supplies, space, support, systems, success, and sustainability. The extent to which each of these variables contributes to the operation of simulation centers across various settings is not known.

## Method

Survey design was utilized to collect data from simulation centers based in a variety of settings including community colleges, large academic institutions, healthcare organizations, and state or regional consortiums. © 2014 Qualtrics, LLC Online Survey & Insight Platform was used for survey distribution and data analysis. A 25 item survey was authored by the researchers using a modified version of a simulation center description tool acquired through the National League for Nursing Simulation Educator Leadership (NLN SimLeader) Program. A pilot study was conducted including 20 participants from the NLN SimLeader program. Following data analysis, survey questions were reviewed and modified for clarity. One question was added in order to identify geographic region of simulation centers. For the large scale study, participants were invited to complete the 26 item survey through the NLN Simulation Information Resource Center (SIRC), Healthy Sim Linked-In page, Society for Simulation in Healthcare (SSH) Nursing Community Section and Facebook page and International Nursing Association for Clinical Simulation and Learning (INACSL) Facebook page. Survey response rate, including the pilot study, was 72%.

## Objectives

- Identify common components of simulation centers located in a variety of practice settings
- Compare and contrast characteristics of simulation centers located in a variety of practice settings
- Identify gaps that can impact a simulation center's ability to meet its strategic objectives and /or Society for Simulation in Healthcare accreditation standards.

## Results Summary Overview

- Majority in Community Colleges (41%) or Large Academic centers (35%)
- Majority serve nursing students (91%)
- Majority under 5000 sq ft (76%)
- Most had no business model (81%)
- Only 14% were partnerships or consortiums
- Most were budgeted (47%) vs. grant (32%)
- Contact hours per week ranged from 3 to 181,952
- 45% of centers had only 1 full time employee
- 59% of simulations facilitated by academic faculty.
- 54% utilized Standardized Patients



## Recommendations

This survey presented this team with a considerable amount of data to evaluate. The initial objective will be to establish criteria for defining a large versus a small center. Variables could include square feet, number of contact hours, or number of personnel. The roles and functions of the centers' personnel may reveal information about the sustainability of the centers. Examples include possible correlations in direct management of the budget, tech support, dedicated personnel to facilitate simulations and the continued successful operation of the center. The survey contained a free response question regarding challenges faced by the simulation center. Thematic analysis of these responses will provide further insight into the direction of future research. Only a small percentage of the surveyed centers were SSH accredited. Future data analysis may reveal variations in staffing patterns, funding, and/or space. SSH accreditation and the INACSL standards are considered best practice in simulation, and this team hopes to be able to identify challenges to meeting those standards, and inform decision making for the design and operation of simulation centers.

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