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Serious gaming for emergency nurses: An economical bridge between the classroom and a functional exercise

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Serious medical gaming is a technique that employs the concepts, rules, and regulations of traditional, recreational games to enhance the education, skill acquisition, and critical decision-making of healthcare professionals. However, for gaming to occupy a critical niche in the continuing education of emergency nurses it must be: 1) Economical; 2) Expeditious; 3) Focused on low-probability, acute-onset, high-impact events; and 4) A bridge between the text and the drill. The purpose of this presentation is to describe three serious games that are targeted to the emergency department. They can easily be developed at low-cost, delivered with minimal planning, and played virtually anywhere. Game #1 is an Active Shooter game that places the nurse in a patient's room at the time of the assault. One objective is to develop an action plan for player and patient. Game #2 is an Emergency Evacuation game when the destruction of the ED is imminent due to an intentional, accidental, or natural event. One objective is to prioritize the evacuation of ED patients with and without resources. Game #3 is a Botulism Mass Casualty Event associated with the on-going arrival of dozens of botulism patients. One objective is to assess patients in need of immediate airway stabilization. Each of these games are economical (playing cards, dice, blackboard) and expeditious (duration: 1 -1.5 hours). Player feedback during pilot-testing has been uniformly positive. The attributes of these games allow for constant repetition which lends itself to greater competence, confidence, and crisis leadership skills.

Biography

Dr. Rega has been a board-certified emergency physician for over thirty years until his recent retirement. Currently, Dr. Rega's activities have been concentrated in education and research at The University of Toledo. His focus has centered on innovative educational methods to teach about pandemics, global health, and disasters. He has made extensive use of simulation (Table-top and Functional exercises, High-Fidelity Simulations, Hybrid simulations, etc.) to enhance a multidisciplinary group of students and healthcare professionals. He has also published in peer-reviewed journals and books associated with disaster medicine, simulation medicine, and pandemic preparedness and response.

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