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Virtual patient cases for active student participation in nursing education

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A didactic method which promote a more active student participation (ASP), Virtual patient (VP) cases may be a valuable intervention. VP cases are defined as interactive computer simulations of real-life clinical scenarios for healthcare education. VP cases are excellent for training clinical reasoning skills. The aim of the study was to investigate utilization of VP cases for ASP in nursing education, regarding student's learning experience. The design was an intervention study, 58 students in the third semester of six in the nursing program were included in the study. In 2016-2017, interventions have been conducted in the Human Biomedicine course with the purpose to develop a course concept that included didactic methods that promoted ASP. The students performed four VP cases individually at home. Before solving the VP cases, the students had lectures in medicine science for example concerning chest organs diseases. In order to be a complement to that lecture, the VP case was about chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. The lectures were followed up with seminars where the students were able to ask questions regarding conducted VP cases. After each performed VP case, the student answered a self-evaluation form with open ended questions. Data was conducted using content analysis. The result showed that the students found the VP cases challenging and motivational. The VPs taught them to think wide and stimulated to search for more knowledge. Finally, they thought it was a good way to test themselves and appreciated the direct feedback, lack of knowledge became visible at once.

Biography

Elenita Forsberg has completed her PhD from Karolinska Institute, Stockholm. The title of her thesis was "Virtual patients for assessment of clinical reasoning". She works as a Senior Lecturer in nursing and an Educational Developer at Halmstad University.

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