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Using medical actors in psychiatric nursing simulation in a GEPN program

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For the past five years we have utilized medical actors in clinical simulations to prepare students for clinical psychiatric nursing practice. This presentation will review the scenerios, actor preparation, and how the senerios have been used to instruct Graduate Entry Program in Nursing students to enter into clinical practice. Starting with two actors over five years ago we developled a program where each student would meet with an actor for an hour before beginning clinical practice. After strong positive student reaction we have increased the actors to five and each student has two hours with a faculty member who intervenes to assist the student in conducting an assessment of a presenting patient/actor in a simulated psychiatric emergency room. Students have described this exercise as one of the most valuable in their first year of graduate school. We will review what goes into making the program a success and how it may be replicated elsewhere.

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