



SSW Counselling Simulation and Debrief Model

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Abstract

The Faculty of Applied Health and Community Studies collaborated with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) to integrate a counselling simulation pilot project in the Social Service Worker program. Methodologies included scenario development, faculty training on the 'debrief model' and the facilitation of simulations. After a successful pilot run across 20 classes, the initiative received positive feedback. Given its commendable outcomes, the program has embedded simulated learning into its lab courses.

Introduction

The Faculty of Applied Health and Community Studies at Sheridan College embarked on an innovative collaboration with The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), a renowned leader in simulation creation within Canada. Leveraging CAMH's expertise, a counselling simulation was developed for the Social Service Worker program, aiming to instill an experiential approach to learning. The core objective was to integrate classroom theory with tangible application, prioritizing safe practice, risk minimization, and emphasizing the holistic development of Social Service Worker students.

This initiative introduced simulations where students adopted the role of Social Service Workers, while professionally trained actors portrayed clients, offering students a hands-on approach to refine their counselling and helping skills.

The simulation and debrief tool were introduced as a pilot in the SSW Professional Practice Courses, providing students an opportunity to hone their social service counselling skills. The following poster presentation chronicles the methodologies, findings, and discussion regarding the positive outcomes of this project.

Methods & Materials

SSW students under a work-study contract collaborated with faculty and CAMH using their scenario-building template to craft a well-developed scenario focused on domestic violence. Trained actors not only contributed to the development of the scenario but also assumed the roles of domestic violence survivors, providing an authentic representation of real-life social service counseling situations.

Integral to the initiative was the "PEARLS DEBRIEFING TOOL." This facilitated structured pre-brief and debrief sessions ensuring a comprehensive learning cycle where students could practice, introspect, and garner essential feedback.

In addition, faculty who wanted to strengthen their simulation and debriefing skills were provided in person training. Training focused on identifying different uses of simulation, identifying the components required to effectively facilitate simulation, the key principles of debriefing, strategies to deal with challenging learners in a simulation, and practice using simulation debriefing skills.

Materials

- Agenda and Flow Scenario
- CAMH simulation center scenario template
- Difficult debrief tool
- Observation Checklist
- PEARLS Healthcare Debriefing Tool
- Pre and Post Evolution tool (for students)

Results

The simulations were run as a pilot in 20 classes over two semesters. Pre and post evaluations were circulated at both the faculty training and the classroom simulations. The pre and post evaluations assessed faculty knowledge, confidence, and overall experience. Results indicated a 15% increase in knowledge across the learning outcomes. Faculty members expressed confidence in their ability to facilitate similar simulations post-training. Impressively, 100% of the faculty expressed satisfaction with the training, either agreeing or strongly agreeing. An equal percentage indicated their intention to recommend this training to others, signaling a high level of satisfaction.

Student evaluations also reflected positive outcomes. A substantial 90% of students reported gaining fresh insights and knowledge from the simulation, which they intended to apply in their social work practice. Additionally, 94% of students expressed satisfaction with the simulation experience, indicating either agreement or strong agreement. 95% of students would recommend this training to their peers (likely/very likely).

As a result, the simulation has been embedded into curriculum to further support skill development.

Overall Experience (n=127)



Discussion

Simulation Successes:

- 1.Simulations provided an opportunity for praxis (applying theoretical knowledge learned in class to a real-world setting).
- 2.Using professional actors combined with realistic scenarios made the simulations a very immersive experience.
- 3.The simulation helped to improve the students' confidence and competence in counseling, as they were able to practice their skills.
- 4.Students received feedback on their performance from multiple sources: the actors, their peers and their professor. Access to meaningful feedback strengthens students counselling skills.
- 5.Utilizing the debriefing tools provided by CAMH created a safe and supportive environment for students to engage in a deeply self-reflective practice.

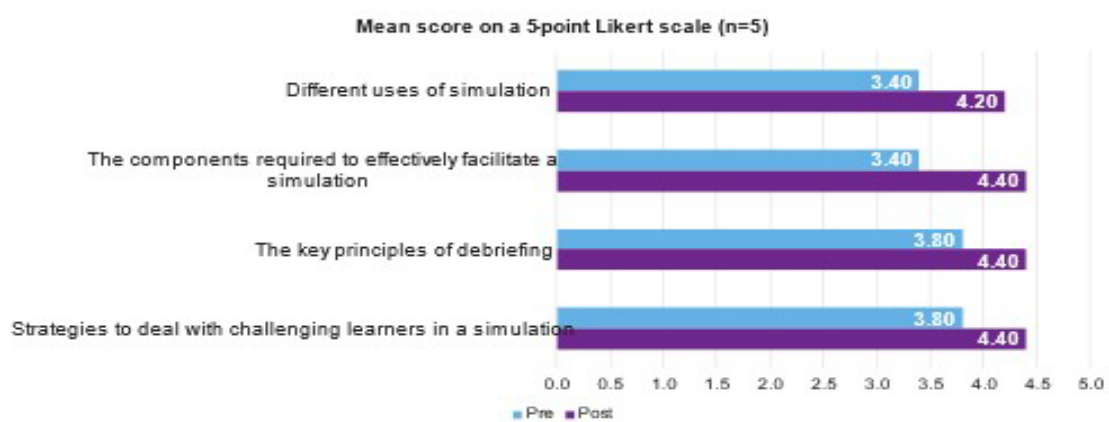
Simulation Challenges:

- 1.Limited time for the simulation, which made it difficult for students to practice all the techniques and skills they learned in class.
- 2.Students need more information about the simulation scenario prior to class so that they can better prepare to engage with the pseudo client.

Recommendations:

- 1.Allocate more time for the simulation sessions.
- 2.Provide students with more opportunities to practice and receive feedback on their performance.
- 3.Record the simulation sessions. This will give students the opportunity to review their own performance and assess their strengths and areas for improvement.
- 4.Prioritize safety checks during interactions with clients.

Knowledge: Faculty report an increase in knowledge across the learning objectives. The average increase was 0.75 (15%).



Acknowledgments

The Center for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH). Tucker Gordan and Stephanie Sliekers
Peter Amponsah, Associate Dean, FAHCS
Taofikat Lawal, SSW Graduate

References

CAMH, (2022). *Sheridan College Simulation Development: Evaluation Report*. [Unpublished Manuscript]. CAMH, Toronto, Canada.