

Real structure, power and agency in simulated diagnosis, prognosis and emergency care.

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Background: Prehospital emergency care contexts are fraught with inherent patient and practitioner risk. Whilst patient factors may be unavoidable, practitioner medico-legal risk is mitigated by a differential diagnosis, contextualised by their prognosis and the monitoring and evaluation of the relevant clinical interventions. **The aim** is to critique patient simulations and to recommend conceptual and structural enhancements to simulated practice in the interest of emergency care practitioner agency.

Summary of work: Almost 100 emergency care students and graduates were observed whilst voluntarily performing individual simulations. An educational intervention was provided after which the participants repeated the simulation. Diagnostic, prognostic and clinical interventions are compared before and after simulations using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis.

Summary of results: 'Patient-centredness' has value in diagnostic assessment but interventions in the simulated context requires a 'practitioner-centred' orientation. The structure of the simulation provides for the diagnostic, prognostic and intervention. The power dynamic emerges in the known and unknown context, knowledge and scope. Agency is measured by the state of coherence of patient assessment, prioritisation and interventions provided.

Conclusions: Impediments to efficacious simulated (and by application, clinical) practice include fragmentation and deficiency of knowledge and experience, misaligned ontological assumptions and paedagogic misconceptions. Simulations should focus on the learner/practitioner as the lead actor whose actions are predicated upon knowledge, motives and beliefs, all of which can be problematized and influenced by the simulation. Take-home messages: The reflexivity dynamic (in the form of reciprocal determinism) and diagnostic reasoning inherent in emergency care simulations enables agency building or limits there-to, particularly if the simulation is validly 'structured' and reliably 'powered'.