

Development and Assessment of Virtual Family as a Learning Tool in the Application of Evidence-Based Medicine to the Management of Virtual Patients

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Categories: Healthcare Technology

Keywords:

How to cite this poster

Kravtsova A, Cendán J C., Smith K J, et al. (2012) Development and Assessment of Virtual Family as a Learning Tool in the Application of Evidence-Based Medicine to the Management of Virtual Patients. *Cureus* 4(10): e480.

Abstract

The Virtual Family is a project designed to incorporate new and unprecedented educational technology into a four-year curriculum at UCF College of Medicine. This longitudinal web-based program will consist of five virtual patients that develop conditions correlating to material covered in the curriculum. Students will begin management of the virtual family in their first year of medical school and continue until they graduate. I will be developing a single virtual patient case that will be used as a template for other cases in the future and as a study tool in determining whether students learn more using the Virtual Family than reading evidence-based articles alone. The medical content for the case includes clinical scenarios with evidence-based medicine readings, radiographic images, and patient histories. The computer programming behind the animations, narrations, and communication will be developed by the Mixed Emerging Technology Lab (METIL) from UCF Institute of Simulation Training (IST). This educational technology will enhance the classroom and clinical skills learning experience by helping students apply their knowledge from evidence-based readings in realistic scenarios involving long-term patient care and multidisciplinary care, which are important aspects in the practice of medicine. It is also important for medical students to learn how to apply knowledge from current research literature to the management of patients since they will be required to do this in rotations, residency, and as future practicing physicians.

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Published 10/12/2012

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