

IN FOCUS



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NHG EDUCATION

Utilising Simulated Emergencies for Medical Education

By Grant Ng



2022 SIMWARs Gold Award recipients, NUS YLLSoM representatives posing for a photo with the judges.

An elderly gentleman is brought into the emergency department disoriented and having experienced recurrent seizures. To an experienced healthcare professional, this might be a run-of-the-mill emergency situation. However, for a medical student who is undergoing his/her clinical posting, the experience possesses a wealth of learning opportunities.

On 10 December 2022, fifteen medical students from the three medical schools in Singapore — Duke-NUS Medical School (Duke-NUS), Nanyang Technological University Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine (NTU LKCMedicine), National University of Singapore Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine (NUS YLLSoM) — competed in the inter-school SIMWARs' medical student category.

Created by Drs Yasuharu Okuda, Andy Goodwin and Scott Weingart in 2007, SIMWARs is an educational competition where teams face off in scripted role-playing scenarios — utilising healthcare simulation technologies and processes — to demonstrate their clinical management, communication, teamwork and problem-solving skills in a simulated emergency. The competition complements the curriculum taught to medical students by providing an element of realism in simulated scenarios, to enable students to build the critical thinking skills necessary for their professional medical careers.

SIMWARs was first introduced to Singapore in 2014 to encourage friendly competition between different Emergency Departments, and was subsequently brought to Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH) in 2019 by Associate Professor Tham Kum Ying (Education Director, TTSH). Other categories of SIMWARs include the pre-hospital category for SCDF Paramedics and SAF Combat Medics, as well as the inter-hospital category.

Dr Muhammad Nursuhairi Bin Sumarni (Consultant, TTSH Emergency Department), who organised the SIMWARs competition, shared his thoughts on how SIMWARs benefited the medical students.

"While preparing, they would have revised common emergency conditions which would also help them prepare for their examinations," he explained.

During the simulation, the teams of medical students had to treat an elderly patient who was initially disoriented and had recurrent seizures. As the scenario played out, they eventually discover that the patient had a spontaneous intracranial haemorrhage which was complicated by the fact that he was also on oral anticoagulants. Further into the simulation, the patient developed vomiting and persistent drowsiness which required intubation for airway protection. A handful of students were able to further diagnose that the patient was suffering from 'Status Epilepticus' (seizure lasting for more than five minutes).

The clinical performance of the medical students was evaluated by the competition's three judges, emergency medicine physicians: Dr Teo Han Jie, Clinical Professor Fatimah Binte Abdul Lateef, and Associate Professor Shirley Ooi Beng Suat.

Clinical Professor Fatimah Binte Abdul Lateef (Senior Consultant, Singapore General Hospital) echoed Dr Suhairi and shared her hopes of making simulation practice more prominent in medical education.

Prof Fatimah believed that SIMWARs provided a "simulated immersive environment... (for) students in their learning process". She was glad that the medical students were able to "immerse themselves and... (suspend their) disbelief so that they really feel that the mannequin is their patient," a view that was also shared by A/Prof Ooi (Senior Consultant, National University Hospital).

Dr Suhairi added that the students were "well-prepared for the competition and displayed a high level of confidence and competence in handling the stressful scenario".

During the debrief with students, Dr Teo (Consultant, TTSH) left a nugget of advice, sharing that medical staff are often swept up in the chaos of an emergency situation, leaving the patient's worried family behind in the emergency ward. He encouraged students to keep the feelings of the patient's family in mind as they render care, and ensure that the family is kept in the loop of the patient's condition whenever possible.

The medical students felt that SIMWARs prepared them to be Postgraduate Year 1 (PGY1) doctors. "(SIMWARs) helps to train us in (our) quick-thinking... The thought process — What to think about? What to ask? — are very relevant, even though it is not tested in MBBS per se. It is a very valuable experience", said Mr Marcus Soon from the NTU LKCMedicine team.

Ms Shermaine Lim from the NUS YLLSoM team shared that she signed up for the competition because she wanted to be more familiar with scenarios for when she is called to see a patient as a PGY1. Her teammate, Mr Maxz Ho also added that patients rarely have their diagnosis in hand when you see them. It is the clinician's role to listen to the patient's complaints and work out their condition on the spot.

At the end of the competition, prizes were awarded to the medical students. With the team from NUS YLLSoM receiving the Gold award; the team from NTU LKCMedicine receiving the Silver award; and the team from Duke-NUS receiving the Bronze award.



SIMWARs judges (from left): Dr Teo Han Jie, Clinical Professor Fatimah Binte Abdul Lateef, and Associate Professor Shirley Ooi Beng Suat, deliberating on the performances of the medical students.

Developing a TPE Primer: A Guide to Turning Patients into their Own Health Heroes

By Grant Ng

A patient comes to see you, a healthcare provider, during their outpatient appointment. When asked about their progression with their home exercises, you find out that they have not been following through with them.

Or perhaps in another scenario, after you prescribe some medication to your patient(s), they stare blankly at the prescription before asking you to read or interpret to them; or they shake their heads (and rush off) when you asked if they have any questions.

Sounds familiar?

Patient passivity in healthcare tends to be the norm. Patients often do not feel the need to actively participate or ask questions regarding their diagnosis and treatment decisions. This could be due to a variety of reasons such as lacking the necessary knowledge, and internalised beliefs about roles and responsibilities - the responsibility of their health lies with the healthcare providers.

As care providers, Healthcare Professionals (HCPs) often meet with patients from various life situations and socio-economic backgrounds. Communication with patients will therefore have to be tailored, based on a variety of factors, such as their health literacy, or even how empowered they may feel regarding their health condition. What works for one patient might not work for another, making it important to personalise each interaction.

Traditional patient education (PE) models often place the HCP in the 'expert' position and the patient in a 'passive recipient' position, resulting in PE being viewed primarily as a top-down transfer of healthcare knowledge, and inadvertently reinforcing patient passivity.

Therapeutic Patient Education (TPE), on the other hand, focuses on the HCP and patient co-creating a health management plan that takes into consideration the patient's values, their knowledge of their health and condition(s), as well as their lifestyle. It allows for the education and enablement of patients and their families to better manage the treatment of their conditions, take preventive measures, and maintain or improve their quality of life.

The Wellness Learning Journey on Pre-frailty is one such initiative. Leveraging on the NHG Mobile Healthapp, Dr Ranjana Archaya (Senior Consultant, General Medicine) and her team at Tan Tock Seng



What's in the Primer?

1. Introduction
2. Defining Therapeutic Patient Education
3. Health Literacy and the Agent Patient
4. General Assessment of Health Literacy
5. Considerations and Evolving Competencies for HCPs
6. Establishing Patients Needs, Expectations and Receptiveness
7. Situations that Require Special Attention
8. Key Theoretic
9. Developing Successful TPE Programmes Employing the ADDIE Model
10. A Summary of High Quality TPE
11. Becoming a Health Literate Organization



Speakers (from left) Drs Paul Victor Patinadan and Winnie Teo, shared a sneak peek of the TPE Primer at last October's Tan Tock Seng Hospital's Virtual PE (Patient Education) Hospital Conference

Hospital developed this e-learning module to help the general public (healthy individuals) identify and understand their potential health risk(s), and offer preventive measure(s) that they can adopt to mitigate the risk(s); using a suite of TPE-informed interactive resources that are presented bite-sized, in plain language, and learner driven.

To aid HCPs in their awareness of TPE fundamentals, NHG College and Group Education launched a TPE primer at the Virtual Patient Education Conference held in October 2022. The primer, which includes patient assessment tools and tips for developing TPE materials, will serve as a toolkit to help HCPs design more effective TPE materials, and empower their patients to take ownership of their health.

If the scenarios shared at the start resonate with you, keep an eye out for announcements in your inbox as the TPE Primer will soon be made available in FY23.

Note: The TPE Primer is currently only available to staff from the National Healthcare Group and its institutions.

Humanity at the Heart of Healthcare Seminar Series by NHG Education Research: I Am What I Ate

The 'Food for Life and Palliation' (FLiP) model for understanding the lived experience of eating among Singaporean palliative care patients and their families.

The first session of the Humanity at the Heart of Healthcare Seminar Series was conducted by National Healthcare Group's Education Research team in collaboration with Singapore Hospice Council on 10 January 2023. The session featured Assistant Professor Paul Victor Patinadan, from the Psychology Programme at the School of Social Sciences (SSS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU) Singapore, and was moderated by Dr Allyn Hum, Senior Consultant (Palliative Medicine), Tan Tock Seng Hospital.

At the seminar, Dr Paul shared his research on the significance of food identities and 'food voices' of Asian palliative care patients and their families. His study identified four major themes: i) Feeding Identity and Familial Bonds; ii) Liminal Subsistence in Illness Transitions; iii) Food becoming Lineage; and iv) Compassionate Nourishment. These themes were subsequently organised into the Food for Life and Palliation (FLiP) model, which is currently being used to understand the relationship between food and terminally-ill patients (together with their caregivers); and how food empowers these individuals with dignity and a grounding sense of identity.

The origins of the FLiP model stemmed from Dr Paul's research with Associate Professor Andy Hau Yan Ho (SSS, NTU) from the Family Dignity Intervention (FDI). FDI aims to reduce suffering and distress; and works to achieve a sense of hope and meaning for older terminally ill patients and their families in Singapore and



Speakers (from left) Dr Paul Victor Patinadan and moderator, Dr Allyn Hum

greater Asia. It achieves these objectives through the use of reminiscence, dignity, and narrative-based therapies.

It was through the FDI sessions that Dr Paul observed that his participants started to organically talk about food and food-related memories, the relational aspect that they had with food, and how food was a major source of dignity and empowerment.

With food forming a large part of the Singaporean identity and cultural heritage, Dr Paul was not surprised that food was a recurrent topic during these conversations. He cited former Minister of Trade and Industry Mr Lim Hng Kiang, who had said: "As Singaporeans, we spend a lot of

time eating and thinking about food... Even when we are eating, we are already thinking about the next meal!"

"(And) when you take two Singaporeans, you put them in the middle of any other city in the world, they are going to start talking about food," added Dr Paul. "That's how (much food) is in our (Singaporean) blood." He found that "every ethnic identity has this phrase, 'Have you eaten?,' however, "the subtext is really much more than have you simply eaten."

Intrigued by this, he and his team decided to embark on research to better understand the relationship between patients and food, deemed their 'food voice', which had led to the formation of the FLiP model.

Dr Paul shared that the term 'food voice', originally coined by Associate Professor Annie Hauck-Lawson (Brooklyn College), is about using food as a channel for expression. He elaborated that the experiences that one receives from food are strongly linked to our identities, memories, relationships

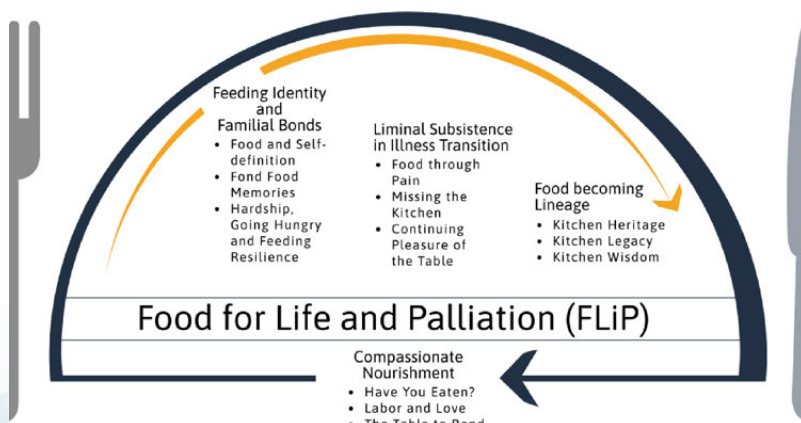


Illustration credit: Dr Paul Victor Patinadan

“... participants started to organically talk about food and food-related memories, the relational aspect that they had with food, and how food was a major source of dignity and empowerment.”

- Dr Paul Victor Patinadan

and life stories. Food is also featured prominently in our public and private lives.

Our food identities “are transformed over the lifespan”, and are used to pass on practical knowledge and life lessons in the kitchen, said Dr Paul. However, for patients with deteriorating conditions, he realised that food identity shifts to one of empowerment. Previously rich and colourful food experiences often turn into a means for survival due

Table to Console Sessions

The Table to Console initiative is an evidence-based, meaning-oriented culinary grief therapy. Guided by the FLiP model, participants undergo reminiscence therapy as they develop and cook recipes each week, celebrating the life of the deceased.

Registration for the Table to Console sessions is now open. Participants who are above 21 years old, are able to converse in English, and have lost a loved one to chronic illness – whom they were the caregiver for- are invited to register their interest by contacting Dr Paul Victor Patinadan (paul.patinadan@ntu.edu.sg).



to illness, but Dr Paul and his team found that a simple meal could empower individuals, providing a sense of “the ordinary” in a life that is rapidly changing.

From his research and findings, Dr Paul started the Table to Console initiative, an evidence-based, meaning-oriented culinary grief therapy. Guided by the FLiP model, participants celebrate the life of the deceased by developing and cooking recipes each week. Dr Paul also ventured into integrating and applying the FLiP model with visual performing arts, allowing healthcare professionals to undergo experiential training with empathy as a learning objective.

He urged for healthcare and care providers to practise mindful listening to their charges’ food voices. He stressed that with a better understanding of the FLiP model and food voices, healthcare professionals can initiate food-related conversations with their patients, which acts as a “stepping stone into having much deeper conversations”, and may lead to more important and specific conversations with regards to care and treatment.

About the Humanity at the Heart of Healthcare Seminar Series by NHG Education Research

The theme of the “Humanity at the Heart of Healthcare” series considers the mobilisation of the arts, humanities, and social sciences in addressing pertinent issues within the healthcare ecosystem and the larger medical narrative.

Please click or scan the QR code below to register your interest for the upcoming seminar series.



The upcoming seminar series on 18 April 2023 will feature **Mr Shaik Muhammad Amin, Doctoral Researcher (Psychology Programme)** at NTU on **The Unfamiliar Body: Understanding Non-death Losses in First-Time Stroke Survivors and Family Caregivers.**

NHG Psychiatry Residency Day: A Walk Along the River



A photo opportunity along the river

It was a delightful Saturday (4 February 2023) morning for 54 residents and faculty from the National Healthcare Group (NHG) Psychiatry Residency Programme, and 30 students from Pathlight School, as they bonded over spotting animals, and interacting with the exhibits at the River Wonders.

The day out is part of the programme's annual community engagement efforts, and the first in-person outing since the easing of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

"We have actually been planning and anticipating this for a while," said Associate Professor Sim Kang, Programme Director, NHG Psychiatry Residency. "In fact, we had planned to visit Pulau

Ubin in early 2020 for our residency day, but we had to cancel it when Covid-19 struck."

One of the chief residents and organiser, Dr Hui Tianyi shared that the River Wonders was selected as the team "wanted a suitable location which the students would find interesting, have various exhibits to interact with, and be suitable in wet weather".

"It was a wonderful time of learning and interacting with the students from Pathlight and their teachers. We've (residents) learnt so much about the students during that short time," she said.

"The students were inquisitive, passionate, and full of wonder. They knew many facts about

various animals even without having seen them beforehand. They were observant and appreciated details of each animal.

"(And) I didn't know that their art pieces were sold at the River Wonders gift shop! They are very talented!"

Chief residents Drs Aaron Tang and Darrell Ang shared that the aim of the outing was to enable residents and faculty to engage in meaningful community work, "as well as develop fellowship amongst the residents".

They hoped that the outing offered the residents and faculty an opportunity to interact with the community outside clinical settings, and give them a different perspective of the community and the challenges they face.

Echoing the same sentiments, A/Prof Sim said, "Through our annual residency day, we hope to remind our residents about the mission of Psychiatry Residency, which is to train competent and compassionate psychiatrists who can look after the mental health needs of the population.

"Thus, our arrangement to bring students (or patients in the past) with us for outings during residency day is an expression of our social responsibility towards the community that we look after. This year, we are thankful for the partnership with Pathlight School, having their teachers joined us alongside the students from The Art Project to visit the River Wonders."

"We've learnt so much from our interactions with the students, and how they overcome academic and social challenges," said Dr Hui.

"We've also gained a greater understanding from the teachers about the challenges in guiding and nurturing students with a variety of learning challenges and needs, and gained great respect for them in their work."



The NHG Psychiatry Residency team and the students from Pathlight school

TECH TOOL SERIES SPOTLIGHT+



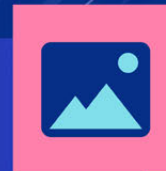
Jamboard

*Accessible within
the NHG network

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