IN PRACTICE

A63

THE ABC GUIDE: DEVELOPING A GUIDE FOR SAFETY AND BEST PRACTICE IN ANIMAL/ BIOLOGICAL COMPONENT (ABC) SIMULATION

Ambyr Reid[1], Dara Byrne[1,2]; *[1]Irish Centre for Applied Patient Safety and Simulation, University of Galway, Galway, Ireland, [2]National Simulation Office, Health Service Executive, Ireland*

Correspondence: ambyr.reid@universityofgalway.ie

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Introduction: Caution is required when using animal/ biological component (ABC) simulators. Their use can pose many challenges and risks for staff and learners. Sourcing the materials and safety when constructing, using, and disposing of ABC simulators are familiar challenges. However, using these materials can ensure more realistic and reliable models than their synthetic counterparts [1] which can create a more immersive experience with better learner feedback. Learners also have a chance to practice with the instruments and consumables required for a procedure in a safe manner where there is no risk to patient safety, but the procedure is not jeopardised [2]. We describe the development of a user guide with Standard

Operating Procedures (SoPs) to mitigate risk and improve the performance of these simulators.

Methods: Based on a literature search for health and safety guidelines, consultation with suppliers and simulation facilities and the ICAPSS experience in ABC simulation in procedures including bowel anastomosis, stoma formation and reversal, microvascular anastomosis, tendon repair, 3rd & 4th degree perineal repairs and endoscopic polypectomies, we developed a best practice guide, simulator SoPs and bespoke health and safety risk assessment templates.

Results: The ABC best practice guide was developed and includes programme templates, recommendations for material ordering with images and descriptions of the animal material, dimensions and quantities. The SoPs for storage, preparation and modification, cleaning, handling, use and disposal of the ABC simulators were developed. SoPs also included bespoke health and safety risk assessment templates for biologic materials.

Discussion: ABC simulation can be high risk and challenging but is an important aspect of simulation-based education. Mitigation of the risk and developing best practice SOPs and guides can ensure health and safety compliance and support facilities embarking on this type of simulation for the first time.

Ethics statement: Authors confirm that all relevant ethical standards for research conduct and dissemination have been met. The submitting author confirms that relevant ethical approval was granted, if applicable.

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