AUTHORING VIRTUAL PATIENTS FOR MEDICINE AND NURSING CURRICULA – SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

INGELA LENNSTRÖM1, CARINA GEORG1, NABIL ZARY1

1Karolinska Institutet, Sweden

contact author: Ingela Lennström, ingela.lennstrom@ki.se

Background: Web-SP is a virtual patient system, among many others, with a core aim to improve students’ clinical reasoning capabilities. Web-SP was initially designed for medicine but its flexibility has enabled the authoring of virtual patients (VPs) for dentistry and pharmacy. The aim of this study was to investigate the differences and similarities between VPs created for medicine and nursing curricula.

Method: Two experienced teachers from the early and late terms were recruited to the study. They iteratively mapped a standardized evidence based nursing care process to the virtual patient medicine template provided by default by Web-SP. The final result was agreed using a consensus decision model and then validated using peer-teachers and finally piloted with students from the second and fifth term of the nursing programme at Karolinska Institutet in Sweden.

Result: The teachers were able to customize the medicine template to represent the nursing care process. Similarities lied in the semi-linear mode of interaction with the patient and the shared collaborative clinical judgment that focused on the diagnosis and treatment of the patient disease conditions. The differences resided mainly in the terminology used, how the information was categorized and the manner the history questions were formulated. Furthermore the second autonomous part of the clinical judgment in nursing had to be implemented, which relates to treating human responses to actual and potential health problems. These findings implies that there may be opportunities of sharing VPs between the two disciplines and welcomes further studies on the authoring of integrated VPs for interprofessional education.

Keywords: virtual patient, authoring, medical education, nursing education, clinical reasoning, clinical judgment