

Mental Health Simulation: Escape Room Creation

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Project overview

Simulation based learning activities, including escape rooms, have become a curriculum standard in nursing education (McGough). This learning modality increases critical reasoning and allows students the ability to practice nursing skills in a safe environment. Educational escape rooms have grown in use over the past ten years because they are cognitively demanding and assist in developing problem-seeking, problem solving, and critical thinking which are essential to nursing practice. There are currently no mental health simulations in the course NURS 129 Mental Health Nursing. Creation of a mental health escape room, would enhance the learning experience for nursing students and provide a final clinical culminating experience.

Learner Experience

- Learners must solve clues to unlock the keys and “escape” from the rooms.
- The clinical scenario will provide information to answer the clues.
- The simulation is story based and learners become characters in the story.
- Students use knowledge gained to assess, plan, and evaluate the patient as they decipher the clues and escape from the rooms.

References

McGough. (2021). Developing Mental Health–Related Simulation Activities for an Australian Undergraduate Nursing Curriculum. *The Journal of Nursing Education*, 60(6), 356–361.

Millsaps. (2022). Time is brain: Utilizing escape rooms as an alternative educational assignment in undergraduate nursing education. *Teaching and Learning in Nursing*, 17(3), 323–327.

Methodology

To design an escape room takes an immense amount of planning and organization. The following must be considered:

- Meet with simulation coordinator/expert at CSUS
- Develop a scenario with time frame
- Creation of video clues
- Purchase of supplies including padlocks, boxes
- Debriefing questions using the following: defusing, discovering, deepening
- Set up of escape room and testing of equipment
- Beta test with first group of students
- Receive feedback from students
- Correct/revise escape room
- Disseminate results

Sample Clues

Students received nursing report before entering the room. The patient’s legal hold (5150) unlocked the computer so they could access the next clue.

Students use nursing assessment to complete a crossword puzzle with the word MEANS, which corresponds to the next lock.

Suicide rating scale completed to provide the next code.

Received orders from physician by video. Students used Lithium level to unlock the final clue.

Beta Test

Students were invited to beta test the escape room. Four students volunteered and participated. A thirty minute debrief was held where students provided feedback on clue/question difficulty, length of time, and possible improvements.



Conclusion/Lessons Learned

- Students enjoyed the activity and felt it was reflective of what they learned about mental health nursing.
- Increase information in nursing report for students before entering each room.
- One hour, broken up into 45 minutes for the escape room and 15 minutes for debriefing will provide sufficient time for this simulation.
- Student groups of four to five works well.
- This simulation will be incorporated into NURS 129 at the end of each five- week clinical rotation.