### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To better understand how simulation affects the transition to professional practice

### EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE

Participants valued the use of simulation in their nursing program in preparing them for practice. There seems to be a marked discrepancy in what students are taught in nursing school, and what employers expect them to know (Hickey, 2009). Participant 1 stated “I feel like when you start out on the floor you were taught everything in nursing school so when you go to do something they [the employer] just assume you have done it.” One way to decrease this discrepancy is through use of simulation. Simulation gives nursing students more experience with skills and patient situations and can increase the competency of a newly licensed graduate nurse. Simulation also gives students exposure to high-risk, low-frequency patient events rarely encountered in the traditional clinical setting, such as a “code blue” in which patient has gone into cardiac or respiratory arrest. When one participant had to perform a skill at work, she remembered doing it in simulation and recalled the steps she needed to perform. Several participants mentioned how simulation helped build their confidence. Participants reported that simulation helped build their confidence as nurses, which helped them feel more comfortable working with patients. One participant said the main benefit of simulation for her was confidence building. This participant explained that such confidence building helped her transition to professional practice. Increased competence helps newly licensed graduate nurses increase their skills and content mastery, which can ultimately improve patient care and safety. Additionally, participants that had experienced a real code in practice felt they knew more than they would have without their simulated experiences. After reflecting on her clinical code experience, one participant said that, even though the roles were different (they were not all played by students with an instructor directing them), the experience was very similar to the one created in the simulation lab. Therefore, as with Theme 3 both abstract conceptualization and active experimentation were important concepts in this theme. According to Bambini, Washburn, & Perkins (2009) who examined the usefulness of simulation in improving the clinical skills of nursing students, simulation increases students self-efficacy in their ability to perform nursing skills.

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### Recommendations for Using Simulated Learning

- Nursing programs and educators should—to the extent resources allow—adopt several simulation practices to better prepare nursing for practice. These practices are as follows:
  - Assign specific
| roles and objectives for each exercise, • opt for high-fidelity equipment, • use realistic, complex scenarios, • plan scenarios that encourage teamwork and collaboration, • include a debriefing component, • incorporate evaluation, • limit the number of observers, and • allow students to repeat scenarios as many times as possible. |