AI-Supported Simulations in Hospice & Palliative Care Training

Enhancing Clinician Communication Skills for Hard Conversations using SchoolAI

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End of Life Care – The Great Communication Challenge

- Limited clinician confidence
- Difficult end-of-life conversations
- Need for safe communication practice
- Goals-of-care discussions often delayed

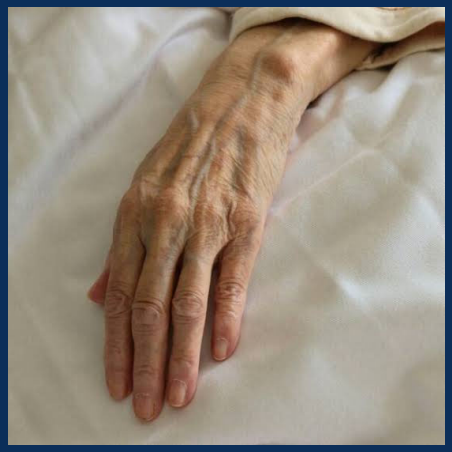
Project Overview



Why AI Simulation?



- Consistent case fidelity
- Scalable access
- Individualized feedback
- Reduced faculty burden
- Repeatable practice opportunities



Simulation Goals of Care

84-year-old with advanced heart failure

Objectives: explore patient values, explain hospice, respond to emotional cues.

System Prompt for AI Patient “You are an 84-year-old patient with advanced heart failure who has been hospitalized three times this year. You are tired but unsure what hospice really means. You value independence and fear being a burden. Respond with emotional nuance, occasional hesitation, and realistic uncertainty. Challenge the learner to explain hospice clearly, explore values, and respond to emotion.”

Learner Task Prompt "Your task is to initiate a goals-of-care conversation with an older adult experiencing advanced illness. Explore what matters most to the patient, assess their understanding of their condition, and discuss hospice as a potential option using empathy, curiosity, and plain language. Focus on understanding the patient's goals rather than persuading them toward a specific decision."

Simulation Learning objectives

Undergraduate Learning Objectives

- Introduce the conversation respectfully.
- Assess the patient's understanding of their illness.
- Explore patient goals, hopes, fears, and concerns.
- Use therapeutic communication techniques.
- Explain hospice services in plain language.
- Respond appropriately to emotional cues.
- Summarize key points discussed.

Graduate Learning Objectives

- Assess illness understanding and readiness for advance care planning.
- Facilitate a values-based goals-of-care conversation.
- Explore quality-of-life priorities and treatment preferences.
- Address uncertainty regarding prognosis and future planning.
- Integrate cultural, spiritual, and psychosocial considerations.
- Guide the patient toward informed shared decision-making.
- Develop recommendations aligned with expressed patient goals.

Simulation Assessment - Undergraduate



Assessment:
The learner should be assessed for:

- Empathy for the patient
- Clarity for the patient for choices and
- Encouraged shared decision-making with the patient.

Domain	Indicators
Therapeutic Communication	Active listening, open-ended questions
Empathy	Recognition and validation of emotions
Hospice Education	Clear explanation of hospice services
Patient Engagement	Encourages discussion and participation
Professionalism	Respect, presence, and compassionate communication

Simulation Assessment - Graduate

Assessment:
The learner should be assessed for:

- Empathy for the patient
- Clarity for the patient for choices and
- Encouraged shared decision-making with the patient.



Domain	Indicators
Advanced Communication	Uses evidence-based communication strategies
Shared Decision-Making	Integrates patient values into care planning
Clinical Judgment	Assesses readiness and understanding
Ethical Practice	Supports autonomy and informed decisions
Holistic Assessment	Addresses psychosocial, cultural, and spiritual factors



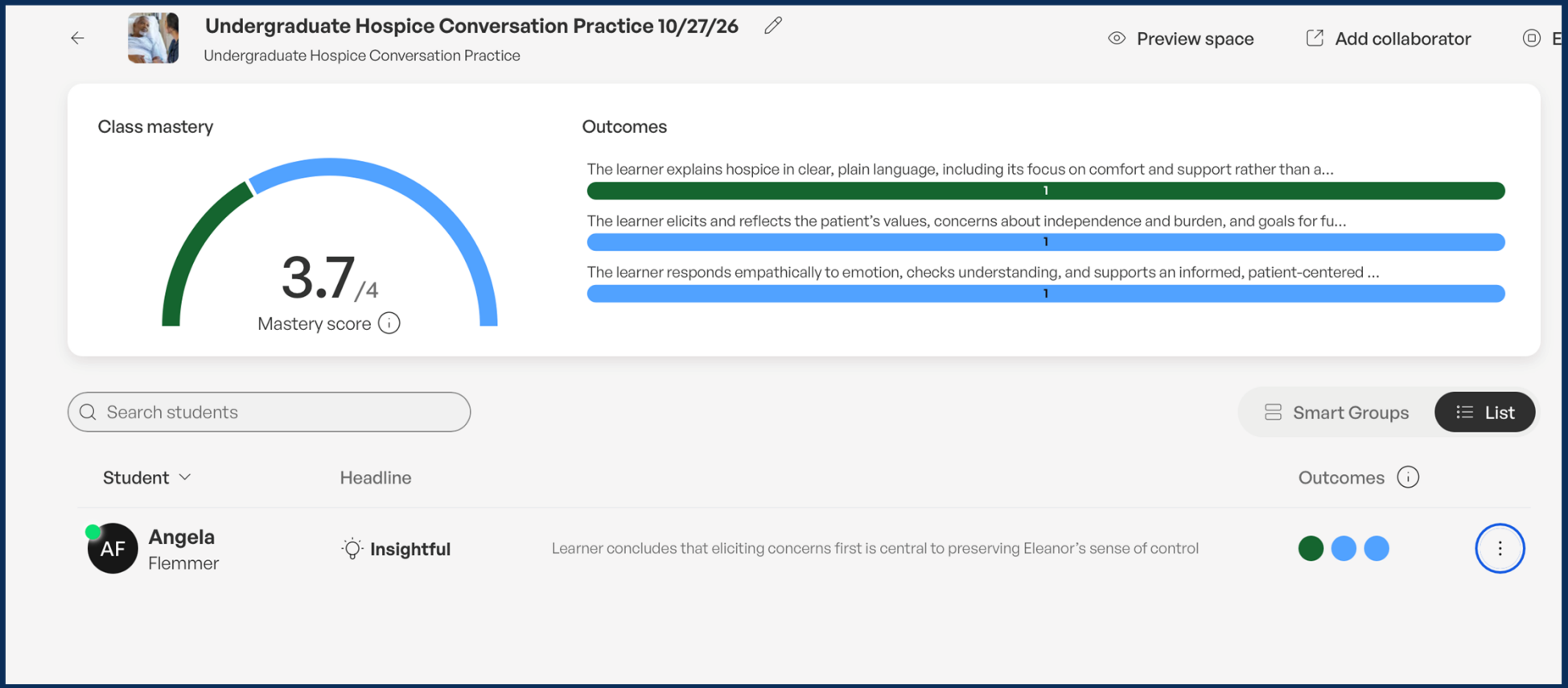
Learners join at

schoolai.com/join

and use code:

8TDP-92ZT

What do you see after the student completes the simulation?



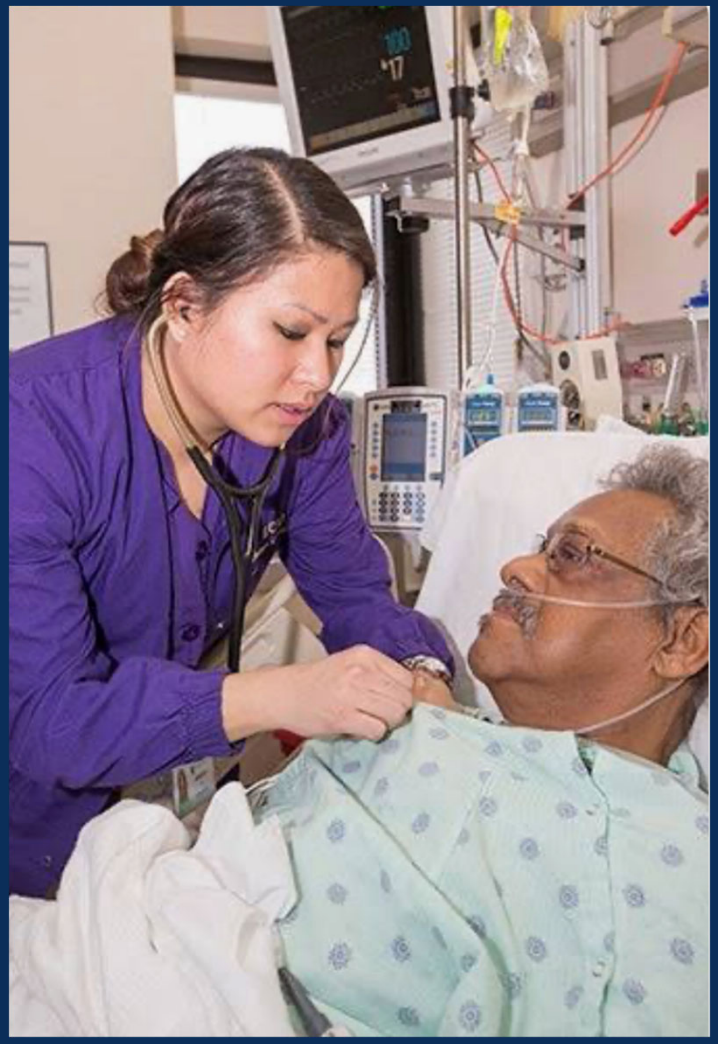
Simulation Debrief

Reflection

- What emotional cues did you observe during the conversation?
- How did you balance information delivery with empathy?
- Which communication strategies were most effective?
- What would you do differently during a future conversation?
- How did the patient's values influence the discussion?

Clinical Application

- What opportunities existed to strengthen shared decision-making?
- How might this conversation influence future care planning?
- What barriers to hospice understanding emerged during the
- simulation?
- How could cultural or family factors affect this conversation
- in practice?



Simulation Debrief

Following the simulation, learners complete a SWOT analysis of their communication performance.

Strengths
- What communication skills did you demonstrate effectively?
- What helped establish trust and rapport?
- Which responses reflected empathy and patient-centered care?

Weaknesses
- Where did communication break down?
- Were there missed opportunities to explore values or emotions?
- What aspects of hospice education could have been clearer?

Opportunities
- What could you improve before your next goals-of-care discussion?
- What additional communication techniques would strengthen future encounters?
- How can you better support shared decision-making?

Threats
- What factors could negatively impact future conversations?
- How might personal discomfort, time constraints, family conflict, or organizational pressures affect communication?
- What biases or assumptions could interfere with effective patient engagement?

Are there any other options besides SchoolAI?

https://orchestratexr.com/ Paid with live AI patients
Has reports like SchoolAI that are downloadable.
There are also premade scenarios

https://www.wistechopen.org/open-rn-virtual-simulations - are free and interactive, but does not vary based on the input of the learner

HealthySimulation.com These are scripted and cannot be manipulated

https://www.nln.org/education/artificial-intelligence-(ai)-resource-center
NLN has a full site dedicated to AI – but no modifiable options

