

# Clinical Judgment of Senior BSN Students During a Simulation: A Qualitative Study

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## Abstract

### Background/Introduction

Clinical judgment is the foundation of nursing practice. Simulations support student reflection of the clinical decision-making process and understanding of application of clinical judgment. The NCSBN Clinical Judgment Measurement Model offers a standardized tool to evaluate clinical judgment of nursing students.

### Purpose

To explore the experience and clinical judgment of senior BSN students during a simulated patient deterioration event.

### Methods or Processes/Procedures

A hermeneutical phenomenological qualitative study with dyadic interviews was conducted. Senior BSN dyads (n=5) partook in a 20-minute standardized patient deterioration simulation experience between September–November 2022. Participants then participated in 30–60-minute structured dyadic interviews. Data analysis included independent clustering of data into themes by researchers, followed by alignment and refinement of common themes. Analysis included field notes and videotapes of the simulations.

### Results

Six primary themes emerged in two categories of clinical judgment and external simulation factors. Clinical judgment themes included Cue Integration, Anticipation of Cues to Inform Nursing Actions, Prioritization, Intuitive Nursing Process, and Uncertainty. Themes for external factors influencing clinical judgment in simulation included Incongruent Clinical Realism and Time Pressure.

### Limitations

The sample size was small (n = 10) as well as lacked diversity with most participants being female and Caucasian.

### Conclusions/Implications for Practice

Evidence of the six steps of the NCSBN Clinical Judgment Model were easily identified with the structured dyadic interviews. Prior related clinical experiences influenced the level of uncertainty for participants with nursing care of the simulated patient. Unconscious use of the nursing process occurs based on participants' prior learning and clinical experiences. Simulations should include students at different program levels in shared simulations. Clinical realism is a critical element to learning in simulations. Further analysis of factors contributing to Time Pressure should be explored.

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## Biography

Kelsey Johnson is a Richmond, Virginia native who just began her nursing career. Kelsey graduated summa cum laude with honors and received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, Virginia. During her time in college, she had various leadership positions on campus including within the Student Nurses Association. Currently, she works as a cardiac intensive care unit nurse at Henrico Doctors' Hospital Forest within the Richmond area. This is the first research project that she has conducted, and she plans to work on publishing this study in the future as well as further her education.

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## Contact Information

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