

# 324: Empathic Care of a Person With Cerebral Palsy: Enhancing Self-Awareness, Empathy and Understanding through a Co-Produced e-Simulation Based on Lived Experience

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# Acknowledgements

**Helen Ross** ('patient') and **Emma Greenwood** ('nurse')

**Fabis Duprés** (final year media studies student) and **John Moran**  
(learning technologist), Bournemouth University

**Professor Tracey Levett-Jones**, University of Technology, Sydney

# Introduction & background

- About 15% of hospital patients have communication difficulties, making interaction with staff challenging. These patients **have a three-fold higher risk of preventable safety incidents**, and experience poorer health and care outcomes (1,2).
- Nursing student attitudes reveal gaps in disability awareness, highlighting importance of targeted education (3).
- An **empathic approach** can improve healthcare professionals' understanding of patients' experiences and needs (4)
- **Digital simulations** are scalable tools for teaching empathy and communication skills effectively (5)

## Why co-creation matters

Involving people with lived experience (LE) in simulation design and development:

- **Adds authenticity** by reflecting real healthcare experiences and needs
- **Enhances learning outcomes** -improves empathy, communication and understanding of patient needs
- **Promotes deeper reflection** and self-awareness among learners
- Co-produced simulations **foster person-centred care and challenge bias**
- Recommended as best practice in health professions education (6, 7).

# Aims and Objectives

## Co-create a simulation-based resource to:

- Highlight challenges and risks for patients with communication difficulties
- Promote awareness of nurses' and healthcare workers' legal and professional duty to meet every patient's communication needs
- Use a realistic scenario to explore perspectives of both patient and healthcare professional.
- Foster reflection to enhance students' self-awareness and empathy, emotional intelligence and person-centred practice.

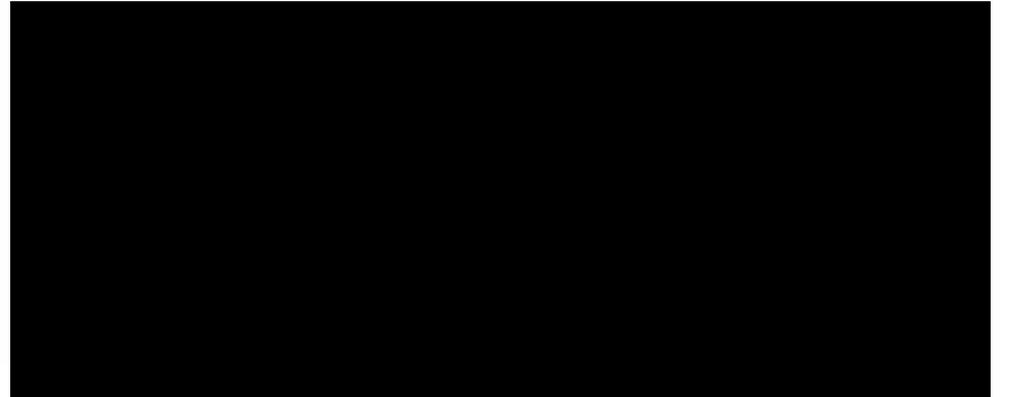
# Co-created simulation of real-life experience



## Hospital Admission

"Hi! Morning ..Helen!"

**First Impressions**



# Impact on learning (film and discussion)

## Key points of learning for practice extracted from student feedback

- 1. Compassion & Non-Judgement:** Treat everyone with dignity and respect. Avoid assumptions and stereotypes. See the person, not the condition
- 2. Communication & Understanding:** Actively listen and involve the person. Ask how they prefer to communicate. Take time to build rapport and ensure mutual understanding
- 3. Education & Self-Development:** Educate self and others to improve care. Build evidence-based knowledge. Learn from experience and reflection on practise.
- 4. Role Modelling & Professionalism:** Be a positive example and role model. Empower self and others through compassionate practice. Demonstrate patience, openness, and kindness
- 5. Person-Centred & Holistic Care.** Recognise each individual's unique needs and preferences. Involve patients/families/carers when appropriate to support communication and decision-making. Provide holistic, inclusive, and respectful care

# E-Simulation

## Ethics-approved evaluation of nursing students' reflections on the e-simulation *'How Self Aware and Empathic Are You'?*

Emerging themes from 51 first year nursing students' responses to the question *How will these insights enhance your practice and care of patients?*

- Person-centred & holistic care – respect individual needs and rights
- Empathy & perspective taking – see situations through patient's eyes
- Communication adaptability – use varied methods, active listening
- Self-reflection – continuous learning and professional growth

# Virtual Empathy Museum Simulation Room



# Invitation to test empathy e-learning resource

- You are invited to complete the online e-learning activity 'How self aware are you?' with inbuilt CSES pre and post-test survey.
- Duration, about 25 minutes
- If you include your email address in the free text box at the end of the survey, we will send you a copy of the report of conference responses



<https://app.onlinesurveys.jisc.ac.uk/s/bournemouth/how-self-aware-are-you-conf>

# Closing comments. Any questions?

## A comment from Helen:

Cerebral palsy is just something I have; it is not a problem. My cerebral palsy is not my disability; society is my disability and sadly people's attitudes toward me. People automatically think I have a learning disability, just because I talk funny and I sit in a wheelchair. People just treat me like a child. ~ Helen Ross

## Thank you!

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