



# Caring to Collaborate: Houseless Simulation in Interprofessional Education



## Background

Educational experiences that build awareness and empathy for houseless persons are essential for the development of a healthcare workforce capable of caring for this vulnerable population.

The houseless simulation exercise (HSE) is an innovative interprofessional education (IPE) activity to support medicine, nursing, pharmacy, social work, and public health students in developing skills to provide effective and compassionate care for houseless individuals.

## Methods

### Pilot:

- Immersive online activity using Jamboard, a collaboration tool that allowed students to drag and drop decisions using sticky notes. Students assumed the role of a single parent facing challenges related to houselessness and made choices about where to stay the night.
- Facilitators read the details of the impact of the decisions, which were tracked using physical cards. Heart cards represented the stress and emotional impact and dollar cards represented financial impact of their choices.
- Interprofessional debriefing: Students' debriefing focused on uncovering assumptions and implicit biases toward houselessness.

### Year 1 (post pilot)

- Immersive online activity was enhanced to include breakout rooms representative of locations the students chose to spend the night. Also added was a narrative read by an actor and a PowerPoint presentation with embedded audio and visuals representative of locations chosen to increase the affective load of decision making on the students.
- Interprofessional debriefing was expanded to include discussions about the impacts of SDOH.
- Addition of a Part 2 teamwork activity regarding potential interventions to help their character including recommendations for policy change.
- Addition of preparatory assignments prior to coming to simulation including review of a place-based video regarding houselessness, macro-level policy research, review of a SDOH framework and information about local organizations supporting houseless individuals.

This innovative IPE helped students uncover personal biases, identify impacts of social determinants of health, and gain interprofessional team skills.

## Discussion

- The Houseless Simulation Exercise was an effective educational strategy increasing student awareness of issues experienced by people experiencing houselessness and increase empathy in providing care.
- Students also reported value in working as an interprofessional team, as well as collaborating on potential future changes, and expressed the desire for an in-person activity and for a more streamlined discussion.
- The Year 1 activity, while designed to be more immersive and provide the students with more agency in decision making, also required an increase in faculty and staff time to operationalize.
- Future efforts will simplify and streamline activities without reducing the impact and learning outcomes.

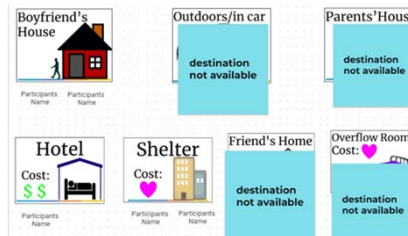


Figure 1. Pilot year, Part 1 - example of collaborative online sticky note activity.

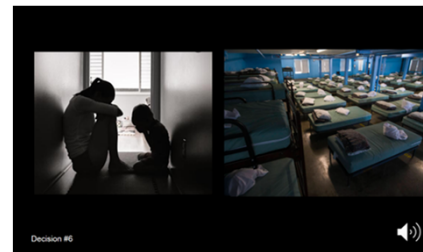
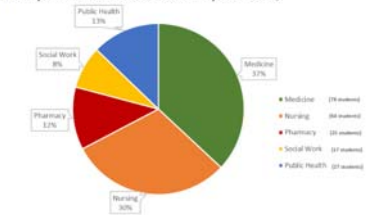


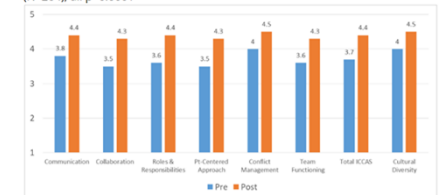
Figure 2. Year 1, Part 1 - example of PowerPoint breakout room location with images and sounds, and actor-read impact of the decision choice.

## Quantitative Results Participants in Year 1

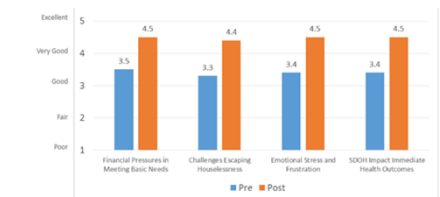
204/211 completed evaluations, 96.7% response rate)



## Mean ICCAS Domain Scores (Pre and Post) by Student Self-Assessment (N=204); all p<0.0001



## Mean Scores (Pre and Post) Student Awareness of Challenges Faced by People Experiencing Houselessness (N=204); all p<0.0001



## Contributors

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