

What's New

4,000 HHC Staff Participate in Simulation Training Courses



More than 4,000 HHC clinical staff and health professionals have participated in a variety of courses offered by the HHC Institute for Medical Simulation and Advanced Learning (IMSAL) since its opening in October 2010. A wide range of professionals, including attending physicians, nurses, medical fellows, resident physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, midwives and respiratory therapists have been able to gain valuable experience through the simulated real-life scenarios practiced at IMSAL.

As “learners,” HHC staff are exposed to a rich curriculum designed to improve teamwork, communications, and psychomotor skills. The courses are created with emphasis on areas that have potential for immediate and measurable patient care improvements. Training topics include airway management and code team training for both adult and pediatric patients, OB/GYN classes to practice simulated births that on shoulder dystocia and maternal hemorrhage, and a Teamwork Skills course.

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Message from the Director



Katie Walker RN

I'm amazed at how rapidly simulation in healthcare is growing. In New York City and around the world, there are more users, more healthcare environments where it is being deployed and more types of simulation modalities being introduced such as computerized mannequins and virtual reality trainers. As a result, many health and education leaders who see the potential of the technique are embracing its capabilities to improve patient care.

HHC is one of these leading health systems and I am proud to be able to lead the organization's effort to make healthcare simulation a central strategy to advance the development of our workforce and improve care to our 1.4 million patients .

A key strategy to establishing a sustainable healthcare simulation program includes the training of clinicians in the use of simulation as an educational technique, so that the educational efficacy of the tool can be realized. HHC has engaged the Center for Medical Simulation in Boston (Harvard affiliated) to assist IMSAL to build a network of qualified simulation educators throughout the public healthcare system in New York City.

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IMSAL faculty also incorporate relevant data from a variety of sources including HHC patient safety outcomes , Quality Assurance reports, the latest healthcare simulation literature and direct feedback from learners to ensure our courses are meeting HHC’s training needs

IMSAL also offered a central venous line insertion course that was delivered to nearly 500 HHC medical, surgical and emergency medicine interns during their orientation program at the IMSAL center and through the mobile program at HHC facilities.

Here’s what some learners had to say after attending an IMSAL course:

“The course was fantastic. Learned a lot and how to handle SD emergencies. Hope that other scenarios will be available in the future. i.e. maternal code, pre-eclampsia, PPH.” - 11/22/11

“Very good, helpful course. I feel I would be able to participate/run a real code better after having participated in this course. Great work! Very good initiative!” - 10/20/11

“Excellent instructor, very clear objectives and all achieved, conducted in a way that is familiar and facilitates learning.” - 12/14/11

Message from the Director

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Although IMSAL is still in the early stages of establishment, we have made great strides in delivering evidence based courses with a major focus on communication and teamwork through the integration of TeamStepps principles.

The vision for the IMSAL program includes broadening the network of simulation educators using a “hub and spoke” model whereby our state-of-the-art facility in the Bronx can serve as the hub that connects and facilitates onsite and facility programs at each HHC hospital . We want to bring more learning to the clinicians and staff at the facilities and further strengthen the IMSAL Center as the focal point for course development and research and as the base for faculty development.

The IMSAL staff and faculty are looking forward to seeing many of you at our training and courses this Fall as we continue to deepen the breadth of our course offerings and begin growing the facility-based programs.

Kind regards,



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In the Spotlight

Meet Our Faculty



Komal Bajaj, M.D. is a board-certified OB-GYN physician and board-certified clinical geneticist practicing at both Jacobi Medical Center and North Central Bronx Hospital and is an Assistant Professor at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. She teaches the Shoulder Dystocia Teamwork and Skills Course and is developing new obstetrics courses, including one to tackle postpartum hemorrhage. Dr. Bajaj attended Northwestern University’s Feinberg School of Medicine, completed her OB-GYN residency training at Northwestern University, and completed a fellowship in Medical Genetics at Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

“Simulation in healthcare is important because it’s a flexible technique that can engage learners at all different levels to fine-tune their knowledge and skills to improving performance and patient outcomes. IMSAL provides the perfect forum to do just that.”



Michael Meguerdichian, M.D. is a Board-certified emergency physician practicing at both Jacobi Medical Center and North Central Bronx. He teaches the Advanced Airway Skills, Basic Airway Skills, Central Line Placement Skills and Cardiac Code Team courses. He is currently working on advanced courses addressing teamwork in code situations and is collaborating with other IMSAL faculty to create the Pediatric Advanced Airway Course that began September 19th.

“Simulation is a dynamic and realistic tool that engages the learner in their application of knowledge. It offers the opportunity to fill knowledge gaps as well as change frames of understanding through debriefing. Simulation provides an amazing opportunity to address patient safety without placing patients in danger. As a facilitator, teacher and physician I am so excited to see what new levels of education and understanding we can achieve with this teaching modality.”



Dimitrios Papanagnou, M.D. is a board-certified emergency medicine physician at Kings County Hospital Center and is Clinical Assistant Professor at SUNY Downstate Medical Center At IMSAL, Dr. Papanagnou is responsible for course development, instruction, and facilitation. He graduated from the NYU School of Medicine, received a Masters of Public Health at Columbia University’s Mailman School, and completed residency in emergency medicine at Bellevue Hospital Center, and a fellowship in Emergency Ultrasonography at Kings County Hospital.

“There is no better way to learn something than to experience it. Allowing oneself to get emotionally activated during high-stakes situations; reflecting on mistakes made in the heat of the moment; uncovering frames for why specific decisions were made – all of these highlight IMSAL’s potential to take learning to a higher level.”