MUCH ADO ABOUT THE FLU

ABSTRACT

Students play one of a range of key stakeholder nursing and midwifery roles. The role-based e-sim enables students to demonstrate understanding of the role of the Registered Nurse / Midwife in disease prevention, containment and addressing community concern in the context of a flu pandemic.

KEYWORDS

Influenza pandemic, role-based e-sim, public health

CONTACT

Jane Warland
University of South Australia
Jane.warland@unisa.edu.au

DESCRIPTION

Set in Cockatoo Rest, an imaginary town in rural Australia, the role play commences with a fictitious newsflash concerning the death of a local businessman. When it is later discovered that this death is Cockatoo Rest's first swine flu victim, a meeting is called of local nurses, in order to develop a nursing action plan to respond to local community concern. There are six student roles representing typical hospital and community nurse stakeholder positions. Students work in teams of 4/5 for one of these roles and meet online for 10 days to interact and develop the action plan together.

1. Director of nursing residential aged care facility
2. GP practice nurse
3. Community midwife
4. Hospital occupational health nurse
5. Hospital infection control nurse
6. Community health nurse
7. Senior Influenza Advisor (**played by the lecturer /tutor)**

AUDIENCE/GROUP SIZE

- 450+ students some studying on campus others off campus (distance)
- Undergraduate 1st year nurses and 3rd year midwifery students
- Students play in their tutorial groups of 20-25 students and work in teams of 4 /5 students playing each role
- The tutor also plays a role and acts as the "chair" of the meeting

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- Understand the role of the Registered Nurse/Midwife in disease prevention and containment as well as addressing community concern in response to an influenza pandemic.
- Use the principles of primary health care to develop a community action plan in response to community concern about an influenza outbreak.
- Use effective communication techniques when communicating with group members including
    – logical and rational negotiation with others
    – group skills /team work

TIME AND SETTING

In order to manage the large numbers (n=400+) students participate in the e-sim in their tutorial groups with their tutor, who is also playing a role, facilitating the activity. The e-sim occurs after week 9 of the study period. This means that all students know each other and are already well established in their tutorial groups. In order to ensure anonymity (one of the hallmarks of an online e-sim), the role play is hosted by EDNA groups, a 'Moodle' platform. This is to avoid the necessity of creating more than 400 temporary false University logins in the university LMS!

ASSESSMENT

The role-play is not directly assessed however two weeks after its completion students are required to produce a portfolio item. In this written assessment item they are asked to explain how their participation in the role-play assisted them to understand the role of the RN/RM in infectious disease prevention, disease containment and addressing community concern, using examples from their own posts and those of others to support their argument.

RESOURCES

- Website
- Teaching team professional development workshop
- "Run through" with teaching team (n=13) playing "students" roles
- On campus workshop
  - All students attend
  - Held immediately before the role-play commences
  - Allows establishment of groups (external students)
  - Presentation of information to both students and staff by project team
- Instruction sheets for both students and staff with screen grabs

PROCESS

Each group of 25 students and their lecturer is allocated one individual group. Once the Moodle shell is established with all roles and electronic resources it is duplicated 17 times! Each of the 17 mirror sites has its own individual login and each group of 25 students can only access one site. All 17 role plays proceed a little differently with some groups progressing more quickly than others. Each produces a slightly different community action plan as a result. The diagram shows the structure of role play for one group of 25 students. This structure is duplicated 17 times to accommodate all students.
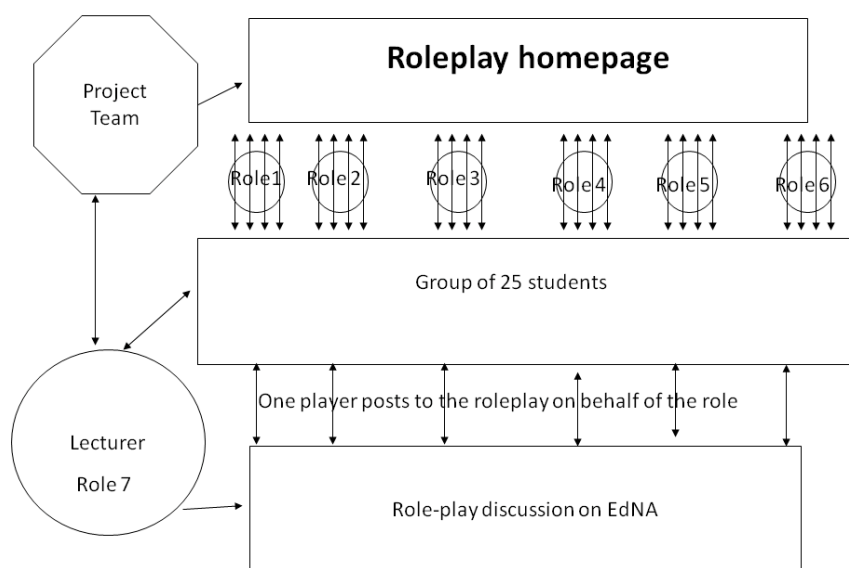
Students engage in the following activities:
Communication, Collaboration, Negotiation, Group skills, Team work

FACILITATOR ISSUES

- Check in to the Edna site regularly throughout the10 days
- Facilitate the discussion. Open new discussion threads when appropriate. (The facilitators are given a list of discussion starters.)
- The facilitators are also given a template for the community action plan to 'table' for the students to complete.

REUSABILITY

The design can be re-used in any setting with a large group of students.

REFERENCES AND LINKS

Alexander S & Boud D (2001) Learners still learn from experience when online. In J Stephenson (ed) *Teaching and Learning Online: New Pedagogies for New Technologies* (p 3-15) RoutledgeFalmer Abingdon

AUTC (2003) *Online role-play: designers guide* AUTC viewed September 1st, 2009.
http://www.learningdesigns.uow.edu.au/guides/info/G1/more/DesignersGuide.html#what

Bell M (2002) *Why use role-play ?* AUTC viewed September 1st, 2009.
http://www.learningdesigns.uow.edu.au/guides/info/G1/more/C3Cliplist.htm#stm

Van Ments, M. (1999). *The Effective Use of Role-Play: practical techniques for improving learning*. London, Kogan Page.