SIMULATION
USE OF
STANDARDIZED PATIENTS

The Standardized Patient (SP) is an umbrella term for both a well person trained to simulate a patient’s illness in a standardized way, and an actual patient who is trained to present his or her illness in a standardized way. This is one tool the School of Nursing utilizes for evaluation of student clinical performance/competence—for both graduate and undergraduate students.

SPs are people from the community who are trained to portray patients with specific problems for students to work through in an organized manner just as they would do in the actual clinical setting. Each encounter is monitored by video and taped for student self-evaluation and/or WSU faculty to review and evaluate.

Case scenarios vary and include:
- Responding to a patient telephone call
- Counseling a patient on a given topic
- Doing a complete patient evaluation

For some situations students expected to:
- Conduct an appropriate history
- Provide a physical exam
- Order diagnostic studies if indicated
- Arrive at a diagnosis
- Discuss diagnosis with the patient
- Provide patient education

We believe that the simulations using standardized patients are:
- authentic
- realistic
- practical

We believe that simulations, using standardized patients, provide students an opportunity to:
- practice patient safety
- critically think
- solve problems
- practice caring behaviors in a safe, nonthreatening environment where mistakes can be made without risk to patients.

Simulation: Preparing students for real-life situations in a safe learning environment