

Development of a computer-based simulation; the Dynamic Patient Simulator

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For obvious ethical and legal reasons it is not allowed for students to practice medicine on patients without supervision. At Leiden University Medical Center a computer-based simulation program, the Dynamic Patient Simulator (DPS), was developed to overcome this restriction. DPS provides medical students with the opportunity to practice medicine on a virtual patient, offering all the possible diagnostic and therapeutic actions as in real life. Students can practice making decisions autonomously, considering the state of the patient and accepting responsibility for the consequences. Students therefore acquire clinical experience in an early state of their studies and are encouraged to fill gaps in their knowledge.

DPS can be used in the absence of a teacher because a build-in assistance system attempts to help students on request, depending on the students preceding actions. The system provides feedback, gives a final score and can therefore be used as a self-test.