

# Med School Watercooler

NEWS FROM FREDERICK P. WHIDDON COLLEGE OF MEDICINE  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA

Thursday, August 27, 2009



*In the background, third-year medical students at USA prepare to make rounds on a "patient" that is controlled by human patient simulation specialist Philip Creighton.*

Medical simulation labs are now being used at the University of South Alabama Medical Center and USA Children's and Women's Hospital.

The labs provide medical students and residents access to authentic patient situations without putting patients at risk. Through simulation, students are able to practice and refine their knowledge and their procedural skills.

In each simulation lab, there are two rooms that simulate a hospital room. All procedures that the students participate in are recorded, and professors can give immediate feedback to students in a separate control room.

The patient simulators provide students with a computer-based patient that breathes, responds to drugs, talks, and drives all monitors in the operating room, including blood pressure, pulse rate, heart rate and blood gases.

The simulators are also complete with sex-specific symptoms. Because women tend to present differently than men in terms of signs and symptoms, the simulators can be made to respond like a female, as opposed to a male. In addition, they are age-specific and can respond like a young child or an elderly person.

"All medical schools are incorporating some type of simulation in their educational programs," said Dr. Susan LeDoux, the College of Medicine's assistant dean for curriculum. "We are ahead of the curve because we have great facilities and because we've gotten into it very early."

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In the background, third-year  
medical students at ...

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