

Clinical Skills Managed Educational Network (CS MEN)

Mobile unit widens access to simulation training in Scotland for quality assured patient care.



Scotland

The Clinical Skills Managed Educational Network (CS MEN) in Scotland has risen to the challenge of delivering its core principles of clinical skills education across Scotland by pioneering a fully equipped, mobile simulation suite.

Launched as part of a two-year pilot study in January 2009, this Mobile Clinical Skills Unit is part of the Scottish Clinical Skills Strategy for Scotland to become both a national and international exemplar of quality assured clinical skills education provision.



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Overcoming geographical and professional resource boundaries

The issue of guaranteed accessibility to training was high on the list of priorities for CS MEN. In Scotland, one fifth of the country's population lives in remote and rural areas. Developing a mobile unit that would quite literally deliver expert training was the ideal solution to overcoming major geographical and professional resource boundaries.

Dr. Jean Ker, Clinical Lead for the project explained, "The challenge was to ensure that clinical skills education responded to the needs of the NHS (National Health Service) in Scotland. Following a scoping exercise, NHS Education for Scotland agreed to fund the build of a mobile simulation unit that provided the space, part-task trainers and state-of-the-art, mid-fidelity simulation equipment. The education aspect is run in partnership with multi-professional education providers from across Scotland."

Fully equipped to deliver multiple healthcare training needs

To understand and meet the training needs of all localities, CS MEN surveyed remote and rural practitioners through the BASICS*, RRHEAL** and SCSN*** Networks to determine some of the equipment needed for the unit, which includes patient simulators, SimMan® and SimBaby™, audio visual equipment for debriefing purposes, as well as other routine equipment for airway management and patient immobilization, such as the Laerdal® Suction Unit and BaXstrap® Spineboard.

So how does it work!

The Mobile Skills Unit is delivered unstaffed, but before it is scheduled to visit an area, a minimum of two education facilitators from that area must complete a specific two-day, faculty development course at the Scottish Clinical Skills Simulation Centre in Stirling. Designed to maximize the use of the equipment on board, educators can then go on to deliver training modules that encompass:

- Emergency care for the adult, child and maternity
- Generic skills
- Communication skills
- Clinical assessment
- Patient management
- Health promotion
- Cross sector skills
- Procedural skills

The above skill sets can be further broken down into modules that range from airway management and ALS to neonatal resuscitation and transport, maternal resuscitation and anaphylaxis.

An interim evaluation and an excellent prognosis!

According to the interim 6-month report in the first half of the year, the unit was in use 71% of the time, translating into 663 healthcare practitioners taking part in at least one session of on-board education. An analysis of professional use highlights nursing and midwifery sectors as the primary users, followed by medical, general practitioner, emergency services and allied health services. From the self-assessment questionnaires, 70% gave the unit and overall rating of "excellent" and every venue to date has requested a return visit.

The success of the unit is deemed to depend almost entirely on the enthusiasm and organization of the host venues and trainers, release of staff and the participation of the trainees. The venues have stated that the unit on site makes it more viable for Health Boards to release staff for training, as there are no travel and accommodation cost implications, and less time is required for release.

* British Association of Immediate Care (Scotland)

** The Remote and Rural Healthcare Educational Alliance

*** Scottish Clinical Skills Network



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