

# University of Bath

Pharmacy educators look to simulation training to prepare students for an expanding role in public healthcare.



## United Kingdom

"The role of the pharmacist is changing significantly" says Professor Marjorie Weiss, Head of Pharmacy Practice at the University of Bath, England. "They are increasingly offering more patient-facing services such as giving advice to patients about appropriate medicine use, minor illnesses and healthy lifestyles. Some pharmacists, with additional training, can also prescribe medicines." Having identified these changes and evolving expectations of today's pharmacists, Professor Weiss continues, "These call on the pharmacist's clinical and communication skills."



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### A virtual reality

In recognition of the pharmacist's expanding role, the University of Bath, one of the UK's leading top ten universities with an international reputation for quality research and teaching, has invested in a new state-of-the-art teaching suite. Set up like a real pharmacy, with a dispensary and patient consulting rooms, each student is assigned a set of fictitious patients, each with medication records that the student can use to decide which medicines may be prescribed and dispensed safely. The new laboratory also includes six pharmacy consultation rooms, where students are filmed whilst role-playing encounters with patients, played by teaching staff or professional actors, giving students valuable feedback as to how well they communicate with patients.



"Pharmacy practice has made great advances over recent years", adds Professor Jane Millar, Pre-Vice-Chancellor of the university. "This new pharmacy practise suite will ensure that University of Bath pharmacists have the best possible vocational education to equip them to meet the needs of their profession."

### A virtual patient

Recently acquired by the university is the patient simulator, SimMan® 3G, fondly dubbed "Simon" by the students.

Complementary to the new training now taking place within the university, Dr. Denise Taylor, Senior Teaching Fellow in Clinical Pharmacy observes, "He's amazingly life-like. He has a pulse, his pupils constrict when you shine a light on them and he also reacts to drugs in a similar way to a real person. If he has a reaction to medicine, he might have a seizure, sweat or vomit."

Whilst SimMan 3G is being widely purchased for training doctors in medical schools in the UK, the University of Bath is one of the first pharmacy departments to own one. Dr. Taylor concludes, "He's a remarkable resource because he gives students a chance to practice examination skills, including diagnosis and treatment of patients, in a safe environment."



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- Dr. Denise Taylor  
Senior Teaching Fellow in Clinical Pharmacy

#### University of Bath

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