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Purpose/Hypothesis: Immersive simulation learning experiences provide clinically relevant, realistic, focused, deliberate practice in safe, controlled learning environments where both technical and non-technical skills can be developed. The use of immersive simulation in health profession education programs is increasing. The purpose of this study was to assess the use of immersive simulation in physical therapist (PT) education programs.

Number of Subjects: Accredited PT programs listed on the CAPTE web site in summer 2014 (n=214).

Materials/Methods: During fall 2014 we contacted the 214 accredited PT education programs using the email addresses on the CAPTE web-site and invited them to participate in our survey. We redeployed the survey to the non-responder programs (n=158) in spring 2015 by contacting a faculty member likely to use simulation. We sent emails to potential participants and collected de-identified data using an online survey system. This study was approved by the IRB at both Universities.

Results: A total of 114 PT programs responded to the survey (53% response rate). 80 programs (70%) reported using immersive simulation. Over 80% of programs indicated they use immersive simulation to teach cardiopulmonary, acute, and intensive care course content. Examination, evaluation, and intervention content are included in simulations in over 80% of programs. Most programs (67%) allow learners to participate in a simulation scenario once, most commonly in groups of 3 or more (44%). In 85% of PT programs using simulation, students participate in 3 or more scenarios over the course of their PT education. Debriefing immediately following simulation is considered to be best practice to encourage learning and 71% of programs engage in this practice. Common debriefing methods included video playback (51%) and reflection analysis (43%). 49% of programs used immersive simulation for both high stakes testing and low stakes experiential learning while 50% used simulation for experiential learning only.
**Conclusions:** Our survey indicated that 70% of PT programs use immersive simulation as an educational strategy. Simulation scenarios commonly include examination, evaluation, and intervention for patients with acute and critical illness as well as cardiopulmonary conditions. Students usually participate in each simulation scenario once and do so in groups larger than is used in clinical practice. Debriefing is widely used and video playback is frequently included.

**Clinical Relevance:** While the use of simulation is present in 70% of PT education programs, the results suggest simulation experiences most commonly serve as an exposure to acute and critical care patient management. For simulation to be clinically applicable, the experience should closely match clinical reality; e.g., 1-2 PTs per patient as opposed to 3 or more, and the experience should focus on mastery learning of objectives and goals versus simple exposure to the clinical situation.