



Society for Simulation in Healthcare

ACCREDITATION

Human Simulation (SP)
Accreditation Standards and Criteria

2026 Standards

Human Simulation

Definitions

- **Human Simulation:** a recognized methodology that involves human role players interacting with learners in a wide range of experiential learning and assessment contexts.
 - Lewis, K.L., Bohnert, C.A., Gammon, W.L. *et al.* The Association of Standardized Patient Educators (ASPE) Standards of Best Practice (SOBP). *Adv Simul* 2, 10 (2017). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41077-017-0043-4>
- **Simulated Patients (SPs):** a person who has been carefully coached to simulate an actual patient so accurately that the simulation cannot be detected by a skilled clinician. In performing the simulation, the SP presents the ‘Gestalt’ of the patient being simulated; not just the history, but the body language, the physical findings and the emotional and personality characteristics as well.
 - Barrows H. *Simulated Patients (Programmed Patients: The Development and Use of a New Technique in Medical Education)*. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas; 1971.
- **Embedded Participants (EPs):** an individual who is trained or scripted to play a role in a simulation encounter to *guide the scenario*. Based on the objectives, the level of the participants and the needs of the scenario, guidance may be positive or negative and used as a distractor. An EP may be known or unknown to the participants. ***as defined by the Healthcare Simulation Dictionary*
- **Standardized Patients:** individuals who are trained to portray a patient with a specific condition in a *realistic, standardized and repeatable* way (where portrayal/presentation varies based only on learner performance). SPs participate in teaching and assessment of learners including but not limited to history/consultation, physical examination and other clinical skills in simulated clinical environments. SPs can also give feedback and evaluate learner performance. ***as defined by the Healthcare Simulation Dictionary*
- **Human Simulation Experts-** Those who work to develop expertise in Human Simulation methodology and are responsible for training and/or administering SP-based simulation. Some may be trainers who exclusively work with SPs, while some may be faculty or healthcare professionals who work with SPs as part of their clinical and/or academic roles.
 - Lewis, K.L., Bohnert, C.A., Gammon, W.L. *et al.* The Association of Standardized Patient Educators (ASPE) Standards of Best Practice (SOBP). *Adv Simul* 2, 10 (2017). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41077-017-0043-4>
- **Human Simulation Educator** - A person with specialized knowledge in a specific area who can provide relevant information to ensure the simulation is credible and/or accurate for Human Simulation portrayal. These are individuals who are Faculty external to the Human Simulation Program, Subject Matter Experts, or Simulated Patients whose primary role is to consult in case development and not training of SPs/EPs.

Human Simulation

Standards and Criteria

The area of Human Simulation will be an option for Programs that demonstrate regular, recurring simulation educational activities with clearly stated objectives (knowledge, psychomotor skills, and behaviors) and provide evidence of ongoing improvement of Human Simulation activities.

The five sections of the Human Simulation Standards include:

(1) Human Simulation Activities, (2) Human Simulation Educational Design, (3) Qualified Human Simulation Educators, (4) Human Simulation Training, and (5) Evaluation and Improvement.

1. Human Simulation Activities

- a. *The Simulation Program is committed to providing high-quality Human Simulation activities.*
 - i. Describe and provide supporting documentation for how the Program links its Human Simulation activities to the Program's mission, goals, and/or strategic planning.
 - ii. Describe and provide supporting documentation for the qualifications of the individual(s) that oversee Human Simulation activities.
 - iii. Document: Provide documentation of up to three Human Simulation activities developed by the Program. During the site review process, the SSH reviewers will review up to three activities (through recorded video).

2. Human Simulation Educational Design

- a. *The Simulation Program designs Human Simulation activities that are evidence-based, engaging, and effective.*
 - i. Describe how the Program determines the need for Human Simulation activities.
 - ii. Describe how the Program designs Human Simulation activities.
 - iii. Describe and provide supporting documentation for the process of developing or selecting instruments/tools utilized in Human Simulation.
 - iv. Describe and provide supporting documentation for the process to ensure inter-rater reliability for Human Simulation activities.
 - v. Document: Provide a list of Human Simulation activities that follow the design process (maximum of 10).

- b. *The Simulation Program demonstrates that Human Simulation promotes realism to meet the learning objectives of educational activities.*
 - i. Describe how Human Simulation is utilized to promote the level of realism to meet designated learning objectives.
 - ii. Describe the process to match the appropriate level of standardization to meet the stated learning objectives.
 - iii. Describe and document the process utilized by the Program to ensure physical and psychological safety of SPs in the design of the activity (e.g., number of rotations, number of breaks, physical, cognitive, and psychological challenges).

3. Qualified Human Simulation Experts/Educators

- a. *The Simulation Program has personnel with expertise in designing activities for Human Simulation.*
 - i. Describe the process to ensure that Human Simulation experts (Educators internal to Sim Program) are included in the scenario/case design of Human Simulation activities.
 - ii. Document: Submit accreditation biosketches for Human Simulation experts who engage in the design of Human Simulation activities. (maximum of 5)
- b. *The Simulation Program has a process to ensure the ongoing professional development and competence of its Human Simulation experts.*
 - i. Describe the evaluation and feedback processes for Human Simulation experts.
 - ii. Describe and provide supporting documentation of opportunities for Human Simulation experts to engage in professional development specific to Human Simulation.
- c. *The Simulation Program has access to qualified Human Simulation educators.*
 - i. Describe the process to ensure qualified educators (Subject Matter Experts, Faculty, SPs) are included in the development of Human Simulation activities.
 - ii. Document: Submit accreditation biosketches for Human Simulation educators who engage in the design of Human Simulation activities (maximum of 5, minimum of 1 SP biosketch)

- d. *The Simulation Program has a process to ensure orientation and development for those who participate in the design of activities but are not Human Simulation experts.*
 - i. Describe and provide supporting documentation relative to the orientation process for those subject matter experts who participate in the design of Human Simulation activities but are not Human Simulation experts.
 - ii. Describe the evaluation and feedback processes for those who participate in the delivery of Human Simulation activities but are not Human Simulation experts.

4. Human Simulation Training

- a. *The Simulation Program has a process to recruit, onboard, and train individuals who participate in the role of Simulated Patient (SP) or Embedded Participant (EP).*
 - i. Describe and provide supporting documentation for the process utilized to recruit SPs/EPs for the Program.
 - ii. Describe and provide documentation for the onboarding process of SPs/EPs to participate in Human Simulation activities.
 - iii. Describe the process to match the characteristics of the SP/EP to the activity.
 - iv. Describe and provide documentation for the training an SP/EP undergoes on case portrayal, evaluation tools, and/or feedback techniques.
 - v. Describe how the Program promotes physical and psychological safety in SPs/EPs training. (e.g., opt out, deroling, risks)
- b. *The Simulation Program has a process to provide evaluation/feedback for participants (SPs/EPs) in the Human Simulation Program.*
 - i. Describe the evaluation/feedback an SP/EP receives during a Human Simulation activity.
 - ii. Document: Provide evaluations/feedback (minimum of three) that follow this process.
- c. *The Simulation Program has a process for providing professional development for participants (SPs/EPs) in the Human Simulation Program.*
 - i. Describe the professional development opportunities available to SPs/EPs who regularly participate in the Human Simulation activities.

5. Evaluation and Improvement

a. The Simulation Program has a structured process to evaluate Human Simulation activities.

- i. Describe and provide supporting documentation demonstrating Human Simulation activities are evaluated systemically and routinely.
- ii. Document: Provide documentation demonstrating that the Human Simulation activity evaluation process ensures objectives are met.
- iii. Document: Provide evaluations from Human Simulation activities (at least 3, maximum 5) over the past 24 months.

b. The Simulation Program's Human Simulation activities are reviewed and updated at least annually.

- i. Describe the Program's process to review and update Human Simulation activities.
- ii. Document: Provide examples (at least 3, maximum 5) of changes implemented based on the Human Simulation activity review process.