

Director's Corner: Setting the Stage for a Successful Year in Simulation

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For many people, a new year symbolizes a moment to reminisce on the previous year's achievements and opportunities for growth while looking forward to the promise of new beginnings. That intention couldn't be truer for the Simulation Learning, Evaluation, Assessment, and Research Network (SimLEARN) as we kick off 2023 and expand our journey to further impact Veteran health care through simulation and innovation.

SimLEARN transitioned into the new year after successfully hosting the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Office of Healthcare Innovation and Learning's (OHIL) [first-ever Veteran eXpeRience](#) at the National SimLEARN Validation, Evaluation, and Testing (SimVET) Center (NSC), formerly known as the National Simulation Center, in Orlando, Florida. More than 40 Veterans walked through the doors of our facility to learn how VA is using extended reality (XR) to transform the Veteran health care experience. The hands-on experience allowed Veterans to use virtual reality (VR) headsets to understand how immersive technology might be used in areas such as pain management, physical assessment, mental health support and more. The event afforded Veterans the opportunity for early involvement as XR and other immersive technologies expand throughout VA. Having our end users involved is an unmatched benefit as we continue building the foundation for how these innovative technologies will impact Veteran care and wellness this year and beyond.

SimLEARN is pleased to enter this new year with much of the groundwork laid out for the launch of Simulation Validation, Evaluation, and Testing (SimVET). SimVET is an emerging service and innovative model which allows VHA to test drive clinical software applications and medical devices in a fail-safe simulated clinical environment before they are deployed across the enterprise. The first task SimVET technicians are charged with is evaluating elements of the new electronic health record (EHR) system that will ultimately be used in all VA health care facilities. SimVET has installed new equipment, established network connections, developed simulation processes, installed required software for testing and much more. SimVET will allow us to test the new EHR system to ensure a smooth transition and continuous quality care for Veterans.

In addition to the official launch of SimVET, a pilot of SimLEARN's digital twin simulation system will be released this year. Digital twinning involves creating a simulated virtual space that accurately reflects a

physical environment. SimLEARN's focus will be on creating small, medium and large floorplans for primary care and outpatient clinics. Using digital twinning will ultimately allow designs to be completed quicker while also cutting costs. The technology will aid in building a standardized design for primary care and outpatient facilities throughout VA. If the pilot is successful, it will be a game changer for how construction is executed throughout VA for years to come and positively impact how Veterans receive care.

We are also gearing up for hosting and participating in several events, which include the **VHA Resuscitation Symposium** between February 14 – 16, 2023. The focus of the symposium is to share education best practices, create an immersive simulation experience and identify ways to use national and local data to drive performance improvement initiatives. The **SimDesign Collaborative Conference** will be held between February 28 and March 2, 2023, where participants will learn to recognize the importance of identifying latent safety hazards in pre and post activations, hear and share information that can help to increase staff confidence and more.

I am proud of all SimLEARN staff members who participated in the International Meeting on Simulation in Healthcare (IMSH) in Orlando, Florida this year. We had several speakers and poster presentations selected from our team, and you all delivered with excellence. The start of 2023 is already filled with the promise of a successful year in simulation thanks to the planning and execution of our team in laying the foundation we need to be successful.