

## HPS Scenario Creation Primer

### Things to consider before you begin

1. Try to design your scenario to accommodate the different (possibly incorrect or inadequate) interventions which the students may take in addition to your intended correct intervention. Or at least be prepared to steer them to your intended sequence of events with verbal prompts and feedback.
2. It's helpful to decide beforehand and keep in mind during all your sessions whether you are looking for the students to provide an intervention, or simply a diagnosis, or both. Students are often confused about whether they are expected to “do something” as for a patient, or “answer a question” as for a test. Try to make this clear from the start when you are describing the scenario setup to the students.
3. Students will often do the right thing for the wrong reason, or without any particular reason. Because of this, simulation sessions tend to be more successful when you make the student think out loud and explain themselves as they go. You may find it helpful when making a scenario or curriculum to start with an oral exam format, and include simulation where appropriate to enhance the points you are already trying to make. Starting with a simulation of a clinical scenario and then trying to work the “learning” in around it usually results in a poorly focused session where students spend time with the simulator, but don't really feel like they learned anything from it.
4. Scenarios can be as accurate or general as you care to make them. But keep in mind that making a more accurate scenario that behaves with few surprises and responds exactly as you intend takes more time and may take a few iterations of scenario writing and testing on the HPS. If that's what you want, plan for 1-3 visits to the sim lab just to try the scenario out for yourself.

### Writing the scenario

1. Scenarios are built as a series of states. Each state dictates changes to physiology and defines criteria for changing to a different state. For example, state: *Crisis* may define a state of declining health with an automatic switch to state: *Recovery* if a particular drug is administered.
2. Write out a series of states to define the progression (branching or linear) of your scenario. A template is available, but notebook paper is just as good. An example template has been created with an anaphylaxis scenario written in. Most scenarios define 4 to 8 different states, including a baseline with stable vitals to allow students to acclimate to the sim lab setup.
3. Give these notes to Isaac and he will translate them into an HPS scenario. This usually takes a day or two depending on what else is going on in the sim center.
4. Come to the sim lab and try the scenario out yourself to suggest changes or new features.
5. Repeat until satisfied.