SimChart provides realistic electronic health record

**Background:** The University of Utah College of Nursing in Salt Lake City offers an array of baccalaureate and graduate degree programs. Baccalaureate programs include basic, accelerated, and RN-BS online. The college is also the site of the state-of-the-art Intermountain Healthcare Simulation Learning Center.

**Issue:** Nursing faculty at the University of Utah wanted an electronic health record for their students that had greater flexibility than the one they were currently using.

**Approach:** The University of Utah College of Nursing in Salt Lake City implemented SimChart as the electronic health record that faculty use in the learning simulations for students.

Faculty are able to quickly modify case studies in SimChart so that they can customize the simulation to meet each student's individual learning needs. All students can chart on the same patient because the record in SimChart is linked to their names.

Faculty also use SimChart Case Studies in the classroom, which helps ensure that objectives for the simulation, clinical, and didactic experiences are congruent. The questions, cues, and checkboxes in SimChart are used to promote learning and encourage students to improve their critical thinking skills.

Before the clinical experience, students access Pre-Clinical Manager, which prepares them by allowing them to research and document the diagnoses, medications, and diagnostic tests for their patients.

In the future, faculty plan to use SimChart to enhance greater integration of teamwork into the curriculum. For example, the college is planning a pilot of a 3-hour long scenario to mimic a hospital unit with multiple patients. The scenario would include pharmacy, physician, nursing, and nurse practitioner students. Multiple practitioners will be using the electronic health record in SimChart, giving students a realistic experience.

**Results:** Both faculty and students report that SimChart is easy to use. In fact, when SimChart was implemented with students in the second semester, those in the first semester requested to use it as well. Faculty report that SimChart also has helped the nursing school meet American Association of the Colleges of Nursing competency standards that include the need for students to be able to use an electronic health record.

**Benefits:** SimChart helps students learn how to document in an electronic health record and to link didactic and clinical information. Tools in SimChart, such as assessment lists, help students better apply information they have learned.