Using SimChart in simulation and skills lab prepares students for Electronic Health Records

**Background:** The nursing program at California State University (CSU-EB), East Bay offers a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN).

**Issue or Requirement:** CSU faculty wants to incorporate the use of Electronic Health Records (EHR) into the nursing program to better prepare students for clinical practice.

**Approach:** The Simulation Learning System was already in use at CSU-EB, so Faculty decided to add SimChart to students’ experience both in the simulation and skills labs. Students use SimChart to prepare for a simulation and to document during and after the scenario. Both participants and observers document in the EHR, which facilitates involvement in the education process. Faculty members facilitate pre- and post-scenario briefings.

When students practice skills in the skills lab, they document what they have done in SimChart. SimChart has been particularly useful in helping students learn about medication administration because they can work with a medication administration record, prescribers’ orders, and bar codes.

**Results:** Students have quickly learned how to use SimChart and find it beneficial. Having students who are confident with charting in an EHR gives CSU-EB an advantage when our school is competing for limited clinical sites, because most hospitals either use EHRs or are implementing them.

**Benefits:** SimChart gives students the ability to practice electronic documentation in a system designed to meet their needs, while maintaining a realistic experience. Students also learn how to integrated electronic documentation into their workflow, which makes them more marketable when they are seeking their first job.