When a patient is in distress, time is of the essence. Every decision matters—a mistake can cost a life. It’s a well-known fact that experience is the best teacher, but how can students learn when the stakes are so high?

The College of Nursing is dialing down the pressure with high-fidelity manikins that simulate a variety of conditions, complete with the readings and reactions that tell students whether or not they’re making the best decisions for their patients.

“They’ll see many of the same things that they’ll encounter when they go into the workforce, but the environment is fully controlled,” says Barb Goodwin, RN, MN, Director, Skills and Simulation Education. “If they make a mistake or miss something, there’s no harm to anyone.”

Manikins aren’t new to nursing, Goodwin points out. “Jake” is a familiar sight in the skills lab—the standardized robotic patient that students use to learn how to give a needle, insert a catheter or dress a wound. “The difference here is that Jake doesn’t react,” says Goodwin. “You don’t get the same kind of feedback.”

Second-year Nursing student Sage Weselowski says the interactive nature of the new manikins makes the learning experience that much more effective. “During our courses, we learn how to complete tasks according to plan,” said Weselowski. But because the robotic patients are interactive, plans can change, she adds. “It teaches us that we’ll constantly have to adapt according to the situation, and there is never a ‘black and white’ set of steps to follow.”

The new high-fidelity manikins—six in total, four adult, including one that simulates birth, as well as two pediatric models—provide students with a wide variety of challenging experiences that range from a breech birth or cardiac arrest to an asthma attack or physical trauma.

Goodwin points out that the manikins not only offer a safe way to try out new skills, they also offer consistency for the entire class. “All students have the same opportunity to see the same kinds of things,” says Goodwin. “In a clinical experience in the real world with real patients, we can’t guarantee that every student would have an experience with the same situation.”

Nursing students will also benefit from the chance to debrief following a training session—reviewing each decision and its outcome on video.

“Everyone is nervous the first time they do a procedure,” says Goodwin. “Sometimes it goes by so quickly you can’t always remember every detail. A recording lets you slow down and think about what you would do differently next time. It’s a tremendous advantage for our students.”

Alumni will be able to see the robotic patients for themselves in the Simulation.Advancement.Generativity.Education (S.A.G.E.) Centre during the University of Manitoba Homecoming 2016 on Friday, September 23, 2016 at 3:00 p.m. at the Helen Glass Centre for Nursing.
Nursing Student Receives 2015 Manitoba Aboriginal Youth Achievement Award

The Manitoba Aboriginal Youth Achievement Awards are presented every year to recognize youth in the fields of culture, employment, traditional lifestyle, business and academic excellence.

Six students from the University of Manitoba received this prestigious award at a ceremony on November 19, 2016, including nursing student Sage Parisien Guiboche, now in the final year of her studies.

Sage had to become self-sufficient and self-reliant at 17 years old after her mother died of breast cancer. Her mother was the foundation of her support system, but Sage handled this challenge with grace and determination. She completed her Grade 12 and Red River College Health Care Aide certificate at the same time.

“I am passionate about becoming a registered nurse because I feel I have the potential to be a successful and contributing member of the nursing profession. Furthermore, I want to become a nurse so I can provide the same exceptional care my family received while my mother battled cancer to other families and I feel like I am able to make a difference in people’s lives.”

College of Nursing Hosts Second Annual Flu Clinic

On the first day, the clinic saw 196 patients and by the end of the five-day event they tripled their 2014 total of 220, vaccinating 802 students, staff and faculty.

Vaccinating that many patients on a walk-in basis could easily have become chaos, but student organizers Emmanuel Hernandez and Miranda Huppe, both in their fourth year of nursing, had everything down to a science. They were pleased to report the event went off without a hitch.

By offering free vaccinations, the College of Nursing is doing its part at preventing the spread of influenza. But the bigger picture is that the clinic also serves an additional purpose—helping train the next generation of nursing professionals.

“Organizing this clinic meant taking on a leadership role in logistics,” explains Huppe. Along with Hernandez, she worked with both the College of Pharmacy and College of Medicine to acquire the vaccine and to manage the many details that go into staging a full immunization clinic. “It gives you a very different experience of nursing,” she adds. “We’re normally in the hospital, not necessarily out in the community.”

For Hernandez, the level of interaction he experienced with future colleagues is an important part of getting ready for life after university. “In the Faculty of Health Sciences, all of us are working together,” he says. “In the real world setting, that’s how we work as healthcare professionals. We’re meant to help each other. It’s good to learn this now while we’re students.”
Nursing’s Next Generation: CanU Explore

January means back to the books—but thanks to CanU Explore, nursing students returned to class with a brand-new perspective, too.

“Helping university students get out of their bubble can remind them that the privilege and opportunity they have is not just for them, but can be used to make an impact on others,” said fourth-year nursing student Jason Miles. “As a university student, it reminds you that your next exam or paper may not be the most important thing in the world; there are real lives that also matter.”

CanU is an after-school mentoring program that provides a variety of educational experiences to a diverse group of children.

Throughout the fall term, 220 CanU Explore participants from Grades 5 and 6 were mentored by over 50 Nursing students. From vital signs to hand hygiene to wound care, each 10-minute experience gave young learners a chance to take part in many of the tasks nurses perform on a daily basis.

As for the nursing students, their mentorship role in the CanU program allows them to gain confidence in their skills as well as strengthen their ability to teach. “I saw nursing students who are literally shaking about having to teach a skill they haven’t learned yet,” said Miles. “But they come alive once they start interacting with the youth and teach with compassion and confidence.”

Nursing instructor Trina Arnold, RN, MPH, points out that the natural directness of children makes it an ideal learning situation for the nursing students. If you didn’t explain something clearly, you’re definitely going to hear about it. “Kids are great that way—they’re so honest,” explained Arnold.

Nursing is always ranked one of the most popular programs offered through CanU Explore, and fourth-year nursing student Jemimah Zion Pangan says you can see it written all over the kids’ faces. Not only do they get to try out instruments they might have only seen at the doctor’s office, they get to be part of experiences that would normally be off-limits—like the birth of a new brother or sister.

“There was a student who wore a sweater vest underneath the white lab coat we handed out,” said Pangan. “He took one of the stethoscopes and placed it around his neck, held the baby doll that he just finished bundling up, and smiled proudly at my partner and I. He looked as if he had just delivered the baby himself and I just thought: ‘Wow, that’s the future right there.’”
Every Child Matters: Orange Shirt Day

On September 30, 2015, nearly 150 students and staff from the College of Nursing at the University of Manitoba’s Fort Garry Campus commemorated Every Child Matters - Orange Shirt Day by participating in an awareness walk.

The walk was organized by the Nursing Students’ Association (NSA) to build on the momentum generated by NSAs pledge to ally with and promote cultural safety in health care for Indigenous people. The event also helps increase awareness about the impact of Indian Residential Schools on the health status and health services of Indigenous peoples and facilitate a spirit of reconciliation and hope among students and staff.

“The Awareness Walk provides an opportunity for nursing students to honour the survivors of Residential Schools and recognize the multi-generational impact of Residential Schools on the current and future health status and health services of Indigenous peoples,” explained Assistant Professor Donna Martin, RN, PhD.

The event included presentation of the pledges to the National Research Centre for Truth & Reconciliation, a “graffiti wall,” and a gathering which provided an opportunity for nursing students to reflect upon and enhance their understandings of Canada’s history to formulate a plan for culturally safe nursing practice.

Orange Shirt Day is a legacy of the St. Joseph Mission (SJM) residential school commemoration event held in Williams Lake, BC, Canada, in the spring of 2013. It grew out of an account from Phyllis (Jack) Webstad, a student who had her shiny new orange shirt taken away on her first day of school at the Mission, and it has become an opportunity to keep the discussion on all aspects of residential schools happening annually. The date was chosen because it is the time of year in which children were taken from their homes to residential schools, and because it is an opportunity to set the stage for anti-racism and anti-bullying policies for the coming school year.

Orientation Days

Fall Orientation is a two-day event that provides students with important information on what to expect during the course of their studies.

In addition to providing breakfast, the Nursing Student Association organized a number of booths in Helen Glass Centre for Nursing atrium, giving the incoming students the opportunity to visit with representatives from the province's Regional Health Authorities and the U of M student-run Winnipeg Interprofessional Student Health (WISH) Clinic—a truly unique initiative that allows students training in health professions to become more involved with the community.

This year marks a big change to the nursing admissions process; for the first time, nursing has two intakes, one at the start of each fall and winter term. Beginning with the September intake, 120 students will enter in each term instead of the usual 240 that would typically enter all at once.

“This new group of students will be making history as they are the first group of students who will be going through the program under the College’s revised curriculum,” said Carol Enns, RN, MN, Executive Director of Clinical Education for the College.

The innovative revised curriculum is delivered with a focus on student learning experience through flipped classes and active learning strategies. Students will also use the College's state-of-the-art simulation laboratories as part of their clinical practice.