

Barton Nursing Department Expands ‘Sim Lab’

Barton Community College is taking its nursing education department into the future, with simulated “patients” and other state-of-the-art technology. “Simulator instruction is a growing trend,” said Barton’s Director of Nursing Linda Gobin. The training accounts for approximately 20 percent of the Barton’s clinical instruction. Gobin describes the simulator education environment as “guaranteed scenarios” allowing the instructors to consistently train every student equally, especially in areas like cardiac care where patients are typically flown to other areas so they can receive specialized treatment.

Barton’s push for simulation instruction gained momentum two years earlier when the college secured a Kansas Board of Regents grant, along with matching funds from the college’s Foundation and Central Kansas Medical Center Foundation, and implements its Patient Simulation Lab. The lab is equipped with computerized simulators including an adult male, a baby, a birthing simulator, and one adult and one pediatric computer module for IV training. It has six adult vital simulators and two baby vital simulators. With the equipment, instructors can simulate functions involving most any organ and condition from heart and lungs, to bowel sounds, to pulses, blood pressure, respiratory and pupil dilation. The baby simulator cries and changes oxygenation. Nursing students can adequately palpate fontanelles, administer IV’s, and monitor the heart of the baby sim.

“Simulation is here in education and it’s here to stay,” said Gobin.