

Simulation for remote and distributed teaching, training and assessment

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A growing number of medical schools are developing programs outside of traditional tertiary academic health centers. While community-based and distributed models offer many benefits, there are also challenges—in particular around providing services to small groups at significant distances from each other without disruption and excessive cost.

The authors draw on their work delivering educational programs across the north of Ontario and Quebec to illustrate a number of tried and tested approaches to providing simulation for education and assessment to widely distributed learner communities. This includes a mix of mobile facilities, online and hybrid physical-online designs and the use of multi-modal communications and collaboration tools.

Above all there is a fundamental need to rethink many aspects of “traditional” educational models while enhancing others to work in distributed environments. We illustrate the approaches used along with the factors that led to their development, the benefits and drawbacks of using such approaches in different programs and recommendations for future distributed program design.