

Director's Corner: Simulation in Action and Back in Person

By: Eric Bruns, MBA, Executive Director | SimLEARN



(Headshot of SimLEARN Executive Director Eric Bruns, MBA)

SimLEARN is excited to be back in person at full capacity at the National Simulation Center (NSC). The NSC, which was shuttered over the last two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, serves as the operational hub for coordination of all national Veterans Health Administration (VHA) clinical simulation activities. It features a fully functional operating room, an intensive care unit, and other spaces that help clinicians train in realistic and immersive simulation environments. Staff, trainers, and students returned to the NSC on March 14, 2022, with a goal of improving Veteran care and wellness through simulation.

Now that we're back in person, I'd like to also reintroduce you to the work we've been doing.

Veterans have spent their careers simulating and practicing for some of the most dangerous and complex situations that could possibly happen, including many that thankfully never happened. Their health care deserves the same level of preparation from VA.

Simulation, Evaluation, and Testing (SimVET) allows VA to test drive health care solutions before they reach Veterans. SimVET offers a Consumer Reports-style analysis of software, equipment, and medical devices including pros and cons, relevant comparisons, unique advantages, patient safety risks, and end-user recommendations. SimLEARN is uniquely positioned with the skills and resources to test, review, and operationalize cutting-edge technologies in a controlled, low-risk environment before they are circulated throughout the VHA system. SimVET intake is based on priorities from VA, Veterans Integrated Services Network (VISN), or VA Medical Center (VAMC)-level leadership and recommendations from VA program offices or other VA stakeholders.

SimLEARN also recently supported the Chalmers P. Wylie Veterans Outpatient Clinic in Columbus, OH, in preparing for their Cerner deployment, specifically targeting primary care, anesthesia, and peri-operative environments. Cerner is an electronic health record (EHR) platform that helps health care staff document and access critical patient data, streamline workflows, improve safety, and enhance the overall Veteran experience.

SimLEARN collaborated with facility leaders and frontline staff, national program office leaders, and Cerner and [Electronic Health Record Modernization](#) teams to make several significant changes in advance of the Cerner launch at the Chalmers P. Wylie Veterans Outpatient Clinic that helped reduce some patient safety risks and empowered end-users to be better prepared to care for Veterans. SimLEARN continues to support the clinic's staff and engage at the central office level to promote simulation as a means for safe and efficient adoption of the new EHR. teams to make several significant changes in advance of the Cerner launch at the Chalmers P. Wylie Veterans Outpatient Clinic that helped reduce some patient safety risks and empowered end-users to be better prepared to care for Veterans. SimLEARN continues to support the clinic's staff and engage at the central office level to promote simulation as a means for safe and efficient adoption of the new EHR.

Looking forward, I am excited for June, when the highly anticipated [2022 Summer Immersive Summit](#) takes place at the NSC. It will be our first in-person event since the pandemic began. The Office of Healthcare Innovation and Learning (OHIL) will share the story of how VA's immersive capability is defining and delivering a new reality for Veterans, clinicians, facilities, and health care. Participants will also have an opportunity to engage with approximately 40 immersive exhibitors and tour the NSC itself. Later this year, SimLEARN is also looking forward to hosting the SLICE & Simulation Showcase 2022. We are enthusiastic about the endless possibilities that being back in-person at full capacity will bring in supporting our overall goal of improving Veteran care.