

# Addressing Nursing Student Bias in Simulation: Diversity of Patients with Substance Use Disorder

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## Introduction

- Stereotypes exist regarding demographic traits associated with substance use disorder (SUD) including socioeconomic status, race, mental health status, education, and employment status.
- These biases may be present among nursing students, potentially compromising care.
- We asked, “What demographic factors do our students feel are correlated with SUD, and when exposed to simulation with a diverse patient presentation, will those demographic beliefs change?”

## Method

### 1) Initial Survey

- Demographic traits students believed were associated with the presence of SUD

### 2) Simulation with either:

- A) Black male of lower economic status, unemployed, limited formal education, and a history of mental illness and IV drug use (literature and survey result conforming patient)
- B) Asian, female, middle class teacher with a master's degree and a history of oral opioid and alcohol use, no mental health diagnosis (non-conforming patient)

### 3) Repeat of Survey

## Results



## Conclusions

- Initial survey results mirror information on SUD bias seen in current literature and past student debriefings.
- Post-simulation survey results:
  - Socioeconomic - Increase in all fields, particularly in middle class which increased from 66% to 84%
  - Race - Increase in White, Black, and Hispanic fields
  - Gender - Equalizing of male and female fields
  - Employment - Increase in part-time employment category from 51% to 67%
  - Education - Decrease in the <high school category, from 100% to 84%. Advanced degree increased from 28% to 57%
  - Mental Health – no significant change
- Increase in most fields associated with our non-conforming patient on post-survey.
- Simulation may affect student perception regarding patient populations affected by disease processes, in this case SUD. This is particularly true regarding demographics chosen for the simulated patient.
- Faculty should be cognizant of these factors when creating simulation scenarios and strive to not only include diversity but also challenge biases.