Implementing critical care simulation within a rural undergraduate nursing curriculum

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A Regional University was required to meet new challenges in course delivery with the implementation of online education in the Bachelor of Nursing Course. At year three, students are required to undertake the core unit “Introduction to Critical Care Nursing” as a practical intensive school over four days, combined with online blended learning over the semester and a 4 week clinical placement. The rapidly developing field of simulation is fast becoming one of the more effective tools to integrate into course delivery in this complex area of nursing practice.

The aim of this paper is to identify the challenges of implementing a suite of simulation activities into the four day Intensive School of this introductory undergraduate nursing unit of study. In particular, this paper presents the challenges to the development of the intensive school program, the creation and development of specific simulation exercises, plus a description of what worked well, what didn’t work and the lessons learned. Evaluation of the success of the simulation experience, utilising student qualitative comments will also be discussed. Suggestions for future recommendations in planning, implementing and engaging undergraduate nursing students in simulation exercises within undergraduate nursing curricula and in particular within an Intensive School model of course delivery will be outlined.