

Hong Kong pioneers nursing education with first-of-its-kind VR learning system

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To improve the soft skills that are essential for clinical practice

With a view to enhancing the training and learning experience of nursing students, a research team at Hong Kong Polytechnic University has developed a virtual learning system 'Virtual Hospital' which makes use of virtual reality (VR) technology to offer an innovative experiential approach to nursing education.

Virtual Hospital is the first-of-its-kind virtual learning system in Hong Kong that simulates the complex and chaotic environment of a real-life hospital ward. With a total of 11 games, the system provides five scenarios, namely "Clinical Practicum Orientation", "Challenges of Delirium", "Managing Multitasks", "Prevention of Errors" and "Potential Heart Attack". More than 1,200 combinations of randomised situations and multiple choices make it difficult for students to predict the tasks they will be handling, while they are required to provide instant responses to multitasks and make appropriate nursing decisions through assessing a patient's condition and interpreting their medical information.

It allows users' responses and decisions to be displayed on a TV monitor for group participation, while their communication with the virtual patients can be recorded for review. By answering multiple-choice questions, the student can reflect on the judgements and decisions made. In addition, the game data and the automated assessment function of the system also provide convenience for teachers in tracking students' progress and evaluating learning outcomes.