Using Game Simulation in a M.B.A. in Health Care Management Program

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The planned showcase will demonstrate the use of a computer based game simulation in an MBA in Health Care Management Program to improve critical thinking. The simulation will also be used as a foundation for its use in management online courses through a Blackboard-Discussion Board format. Use in the online format will enable multiple students to experience the same complex case, balancing the education of the group to improve critical thinking. It can also be developed for training in house management staff, where resources to support in-house management development programs is limited. A skill that is needed to respond successfully to the changing health care environment is critical thinking. When applied in the health care work environment, critical thinking can positively impact an organization's ability to meet the challenges facilities face today and in the near future. A game simulation workshop based on a simulation developed by “ExperiencePoint Inc.” was used to develop critical thinking decision-making skills. The workshop was offered at St. Joseph’s College in Brooklyn, New York. The “ExperiencePoint” Management Simulation enabled health care managers to practice leading change in an intensive team-based workshop. In the “Lakeview Hospital” scenario, participants played the role of VP Patient Services and were challenged to reduce wait times in the emergency department and increase patient satisfaction by implementing lean practices. Participants used computers and team participation to reach goals contained in the game simulation. The “work” – developing ways to enhance on-line learning to meet the demands of a changed health care environment – is important for two reasons: (1) the need for critical thinkers in health care management/administration will continue to grow and (2) as traditional and online programs in health care management/administration continue to grow, it is important to ensure that these students experience opportunities to learn critical thinking skills.