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# **An Update on the Status of Simulation Regulation**

**Richard A. Smiley**  
Senior Statistician, Nursing Regulation, NCSBN

March 22, 2021

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# Introduction

- The use of simulation in nursing education has increased dramatically over the past two decades.
- Concurrently, RN and LPN/VN educational programs have struggled to obtain adequate clinical placements leading to the use of simulation hours as a substitute for required clinical hours.
- Regulators have become increasingly involved in overseeing the use of simulation in nursing education, especially with regards to the use of simulation hours as a substitute for clinical hours.

# Background

## **2011-2013 National Simulation Study**

- In 2010 a pre-survey was sent to pre-licensure RN programs which collected information regarding each school's curriculum, use of simulation, facilities, and substitution of simulation for clinical hours.
- Survey respondents were invited to be considered for participation in the National Simulation Study by passing along their contact information.

# Background

## 2011-2013 National Simulation Study (cont.)

- Ten schools were selected for the National Simulation Study from those programs who offered to participate. The five ADN and five BSN programs selected were geographically diverse and in solid standing academically.
- Within each program, students were randomly assigned to one of three groups: no or minimal simulation used; 25% of clinical hours in simulation; 50% of clinical hours in simulation

# Background

## **2011-2013 National Simulation Study (cont.)**

- Using various measures, students were tracked throughout their two year course of study and were followed as new graduates in their first six months of their initial clinical practice.
- The study found no differences among students in the three groups while in school, at graduation, or while practicing as new graduates.

# Background

## 2014 Simulation Regulation Baseline Survey

- In 2014, prior to the release of the results from the National Simulation Study, a survey was mailed out to NCSBN's member and associate member BONs.
- Responses from the survey and a search through published regulations were used to answer two questions:
  1. How many jurisdictions currently have regulations regarding the use of simulated clinical experiences?
  2. What percentage of clinical-experience hours may be replaced by simulation?

# Background

## 2014 Simulation Regulation Baseline Survey (cont.)

- The survey found that the majority of the jurisdictions at the time did not have specific regulation regarding the use of simulation hours and that a number of jurisdictions that did mention simulation did not specify a maximum amount allowed.
- A number of jurisdictions mentioned approving the use of simulations in educational programs on a case-by case basis.



# Background

## 2015 Simulation Guidelines

- In 2015, an expert panel convened by NCSBN evaluated the data gathered through the National Simulation Study, examined previous research and used their collective knowledge to develop national simulation guidelines for prelicensure nursing programs.
- An article in the Journal of Nursing Regulation presented the guidelines, evidence to support the use of simulation, and information for faculty and program directors on preparation and planning for using simulation successfully in their nursing programs.

# Background

## 2015 Simulation Guidelines (cont.)

- Specifically, the guidelines stated that the study provides confidence that substituting up to 50% simulation for prelicensure clinical experiences promotes outcomes similar to traditional clinical experiences, as long as faculty are adequately trained, committed, and in sufficient numbers; when there is a dedicated simulation lab with appropriate resources; when the vignettes are realistically and appropriately designed; and when debriefing is based on a theoretical model.

# Background

## 2017 Pre-Licensure Nursing Program Simulation Survey

- In 2017, a survey was sent to nursing programs that followed-up on the 2010 pre-study survey conducted for the National Simulation Study.
- The survey showed that high-fidelity simulation use in undergraduate courses increased substantially during the 7-year period after the 2010 survey.
- It also showed that 24% of the respondents reported their institution's policies regarding simulation changed in the past 2 years, mainly due to the Simulation Study.

# Methods

## 2021 Simulation Regulation Study

- The purpose of this study is to determine the impact of the National Simulation Study and subsequent Guidelines on the regulation of the use of simulation in nursing education.
- In February, NCSBN staff reviewed the statutes and regulations of the jurisdictions who provided data to the 2014 Baseline Study and updated the answers to the two questions that were asked.

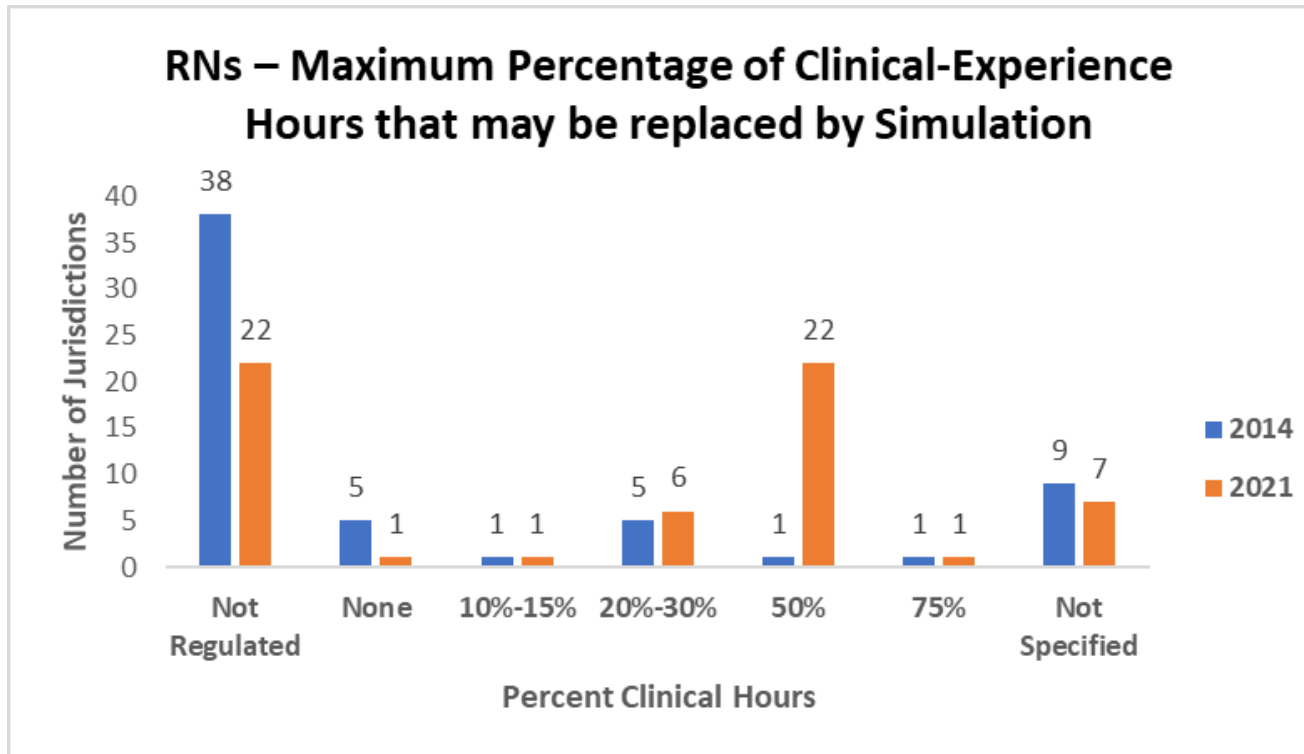
# Results

**RNs – Question 1: How many jurisdictions currently have regulations regarding the use of simulated clinical experiences?**

	<b>2014</b>		<b>2021</b>	
	<b>freq</b>	<b>percent</b>	<b>freq</b>	<b>percent</b>
<b>Yes</b>	22	36.7%	38	63.3%
<b>No</b>	38	63.3%	22	36.7%

# Results

**RNs – Question 2: What percentage of clinical-experience hours may be replaced by simulation?**



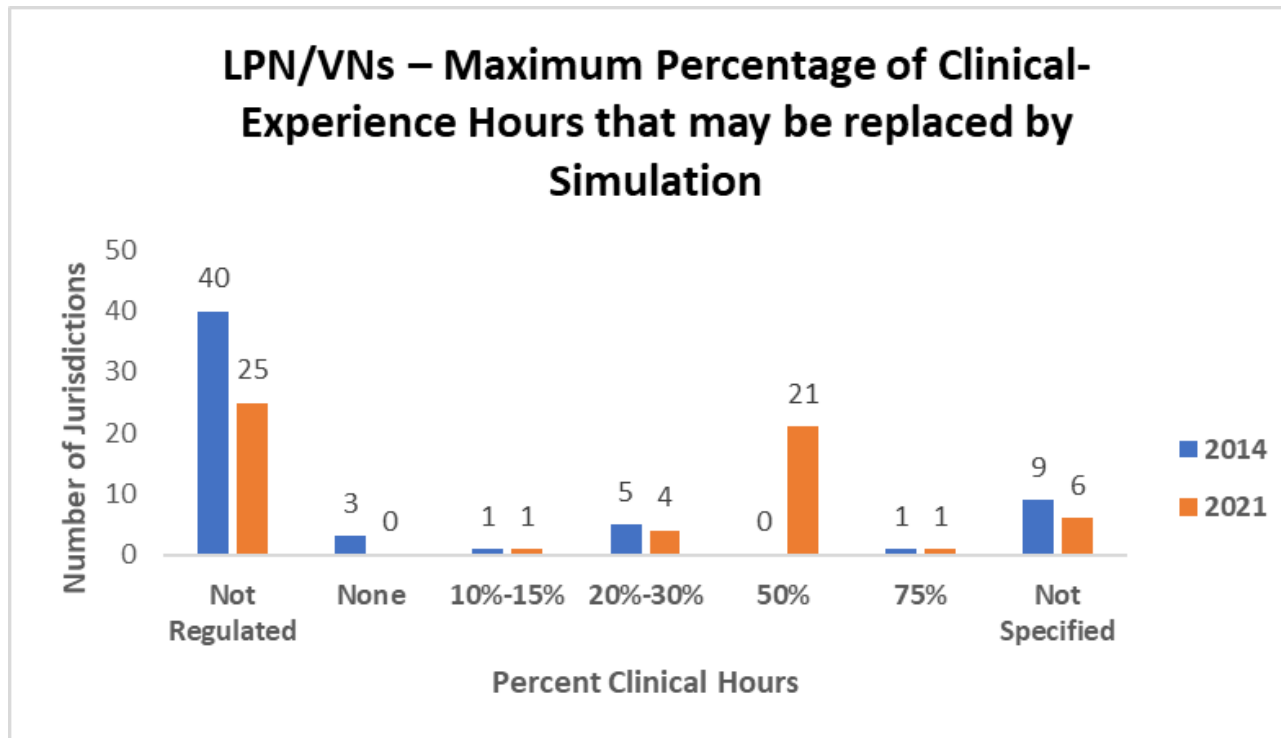
# Results

**LPN/VNs – Question 1: How many jurisdictions currently have regulations regarding the use of simulated clinical experiences?**

	<b>2014</b>		<b>2021</b>	
	<b>freq</b>	<b>percent</b>	<b>freq</b>	<b>percent</b>
<b>Yes</b>	20	33.9%	33	55.9%
<b>No</b>	39	66.1%	25	42.4%

# Results

## LPN/VNs – Question 2: What percentage of clinical-experience hours may be replaced by simulation?





# Results

## COVID-19 Emergency Orders

- During the pandemic, over 15 jurisdictions issued statements and emergency orders specifically addressing the use of simulation.
- Most of the orders involved relaxing some restrictions on the use of simulation by BONs that already had specified regulations.
- Six BONs removed or shifted caps on the permissible percentage of simulation hours that could be substituted for clinical hours.

## Results - Summary

- The use of simulation in educational programs has risen substantially in the past decade.
- For both RN and LPN/VN programs, over 60% of jurisdictions now specifically refer to the use of simulation in program approval regulatory documents.
- Over a third of RN and LPN/VN educational programs allow the substitution of simulation hours for up to 50% of clinical hours.

# Conclusions

The impact of the National Simulation Study and subsequent Guidelines are seen in the large number of jurisdictions that shifted from no regulation of simulation to allowing the study maximum of 50% of simulation hours substituted for clinical hours.

Questions?