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INTRODUCTION: BACKGROUND TO THE IMPORTANCE OF ESSENTIAL NURSING SKILLS

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The authors of this book have become renowned as experts in the teaching and development of clinical skills to healthcare students through simulation within the higher education arena. The team of academics and practitioners comprising the authorship of this book contribute to the development of simulation and practice-based teaching of many vocational qualifications, particularly in relation to pre-registration healthcare training courses.

This book has been written predominantly for academics and educators who work within the healthcare arena, in recognition of the challenges in the healthcare setting to deliver safe and competent care, and in order that the next generation of healthcare workers ease their transition to qualified practitioners; this book takes into account these issues and can serve as an essential resource for both healthcare academics and students. It is also a useful resource for educators who teach clinical skills and also for those who are involved in mentorship of students and those who are preceptors of newly qualified healthcare professionals.

The content of this book will provide the educator with the necessary skills to facilitate the progress of students with clinical and transitional skills. These skills are required by everyone studying healthcare and, with the context of healthcare evolving, every chapter has been linked with an example of a simulation.

The competency expected of healthcare professionals can vary from country to country as well as from one local healthcare institution to another. Some employers expect newly qualified staff to develop competency in some advanced skills within a short time of qualification. To ensure the reality shock caused during the transition from student to qualified practitioner is reduced the book has utilised simulation as a trigger to remind students of the practice that they have seen while in clinical practice.

The purpose of this book is to provide a resource that will truly meet the needs of the educator when teaching clinical and transitional skills through the use of simulation in content and style. It provides research-based evidence on how to perform and enhance skills and clinical procedures in a safe simulated context. It provides an optimal balance of theory and practice so that the reader will understand the rationale and evidence for the skill as well as how to teach it in a simulated environment.

The content is written in such a way as to aid learning and recall in the clinical environment through the use of simulation, helping the educator to assist the learner in gaining confidence and attaining competency. Educators often have to wade through large pieces of dense text; to guard against this here and to ensure a user-friendly layout, the text is full of many pedagogical features such as easy to find pictures, skills in table format, examples of simulation and a consistent approach to the formulation of each of the chapters.

The content of this book is divided into three sections with 21 chapters in total. We first look at the theory related to the use of simulation as a teaching tool. The text then covers the main aspects relating to the essential aspects of care that patients require, looking at common themes such as hygiene, drug administration and nutrition. The final part of the book covers the skills required to assist in the transition from student to qualified practitioner and looks at issues that may arise which the student may not have had exposure to, such as conflict management, incident reporting and breaking bad news. All skill-related chapters have an example of a simulation specific to that chosen skill for use or adaptation by the educator.

The book is meant as a useful and essential resource for anyone involved in healthcare education. The evidence base related to the skills that have been assembled for this edition, together with the unique range of contributors and their approaches, provides a rich source of information for a generation of healthcare professionals and their future practice.