

Centerstone Launches First Known Simulation Training Center For Community-Based Behavioral Health Clinicians

February 9 2021 8:32 AM



West Frankfort— Centerstone, a not-for-profit health system specializing in mental health and substance use disorder treatments, has announced the recent launch of the world’s first known simulation training center for use by community-based behavioral health professionals.

“Simulation training has long been used in many high-risk high-reward fields, including physical health, aviation, and military, but this approach to learning and development has never been used in the community-based behavioral health space, which historically

has relied on theory or role play for such training,” says Dr. Bre Banks, director of clinical education for Centerstone’s Research Institute and project lead for the Centerstone SIM Center.

Operated by Centerstone’s Research Institute, the Centerstone SIM Center prioritizes training clinicians in evidence-based practices for rapid use in real world care environments by combining multiple learning formats. This provides a true simulated experience for the clinician while also minimizing any risks that could occur in real-life crisis situations. Format can vary depending on the topic being taught, but Centerstone SIM Center learners can expect to watch informational videos, interact with standardized patients, engage in interactive scenarios where they are able to apply learned information and provide feedback and proof of learned skills through open-ended questions and other clinical competency assessments.

The official launch of the Centerstone SIM Center occurred this past fall when approximately 65 of Centerstone’s staff members participated in a simulated training exercise for cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) for depression.

“We’ve already observed positive results from our early SIM Center users and are now in the process of developing new courses for our learners. We’re particularly excited to be expanding our offerings in cognitive behavioral therapy for suicide prevention and motivational interviewing,” says Tobin Richardson, manager of simulation education for Centerstone’s Research Institute.

“There is a rich body of evidence supporting simulation learning, behavioral healthcare has largely failed to leverage this training technology for both graduate and professional clinical education. This is certainly something Centerstone’s Research Institute is trying to change through the use of its SIM Center,” says Dr. Bre Banks.

Centerstone’s Research Institute is actively working to make the SIM Center accessible to as many behavioral health professionals as possible, and has recently inked a partnership with the University of Tennessee’s School of Social Work to design curriculum to further train its interns on the use of telehealth in the delivery of behavioral health services. The group is also discussing a similar partnership with Indiana University’s School of Social Work.