

# Pioneer Valley Interprofessional Day set for April 26

HOLYOKE – Hundreds of college students preparing for careers in a variety of healthcare fields will participate in the first multi-campus, multi-facility Pioneer Valley Interprofessional Day on Tuesday, April 16.

Healthcare simulation events are planned for Holyoke Community College, Elms College, Western New England University, American International College, Bay Path University, Springfield College, Baystate Medical Center and Mercy Medical Center.

“This is a first, and it’s a big deal,” said Michelle Sherlin, simulation specialist at the Holyoke Community College Center for Health Education.

In a partial exchange, colleges will swap students studying to be nurses, physician assistants, pharmacists, occupational therapists, physical therapists and social workers, giving them the experience of working side by side in a simulated medical setting with students from different fields.

“Interprofessional education is a necessary part of the provision of healthcare today and students need to be prepared to work together and communicate with other types of healthcare professionals,” Sherlin said.

For instance, HCC will send two groups of nursing students to Western New England University to participate in an ambulatory care simulation and NARCAN training with pharmacy, physician assistant, occupational therapy and social work students there. Meanwhile, HCC will host pharmacy and OT students from WNEU and nursing students from Elms in a medical simulation involving a “complex patient” visiting a physician’s office.

In that scenario, which Sherlin will be running, the patient simulator - a computerized medical mannequin - will be programmed with a complex of medical issues, including diabetes, pneumonia, high blood pressure and renal failure.

“The students will have to figure out what his needs are and plan collaboratively,” she said.

Small groups of students will alternately engage in the simulation scenario throughout the morning while others watch a video feed in a nearby conference room, followed by debriefings about what they did right and how they could improve patient treatment and their communication methods.

The Spring 2019 Interprofessional Day is organized by the Pioneer Valley Interprofessional Collaborative, a consor-



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Instructor Kara Moriarty works with a nursing student in one of the simulation rooms at the Holyoke Community College Center for Health Education.

tium of area colleges and medical facilities, through the Healthcare Workforce Partnership of Western Massachusetts, an initiative of the MassHire Hampden

County Workforce Board. More information and a description of all the day’s events are available at <https://bit.ly/2U5GiTH>.