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Introduction: Human factors, such as communication skills, are imperative to good patient care. In post-simulation debriefs we discuss these non-technical skills with medical students regularly, but do we have a good appreciation of what the terms mean to them, or what aspects of behaviour, good or bad, they focus on?
Method: Six human-factor sheets were developed to guide the students in their analysis of events in simulated scenarios. The sheets focused on one of: communication, teamwork, decision making, task management, situational awareness, or a final overview. A brief introduction to each factor was given as well as examples of good practice. The students were encouraged to record in writing what aspects of the scenario went well, and what could be improved, for a chosen skill. These sheets were then collected at the end of the session, with the students' consent, for anonymous analysis. Data collection commenced last month and will run until December, with an estimated inclusion of about 100 students from two universities. The data will be analysed using thematic analysis performed by multiple researchers.
Discussion: If we can understand what aspects of these non-technical skills are considered important to our students early on in their career we can better tailor our teaching, both in simulation and in the clinical environment, to foster better performance throughout their training. By understanding what our students perceive, analyse, and internalise we can also reflect on our own practice and interactions to consider how we project as role models to our future colleagues.