Registered Nurses' Foundation of Ontario
Nursing Innovation Grant
Progress Report

Project Title: Through Their Eyes: A Dual-Perspective Simulation on Youth Suicidality
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Organization: Lakehead University
Reporting Period: September 2025 to April 2026

Project Overview:
The mental health of Canadian youth has declined significantly, with the proportion reporting their mental health as fair or poor increasing from 12% in 2019 to 26% in 2023. In Northern Ontario, access to mental health services is further limited by geography, low population density, and rurality. It is essential nurses and other healthcare professionals are trained in suicide risk assessment and intervention; however, many learners report feeling underprepared with this skill set. As nursing program enrolment rises to meet workforce demands, clinical placements in speciality areas such as paediatrics, mental health and community care remain scarce. Our project offers a standardized, virtual training intervention to address this gap, advancing interprofessional education by fostering collaboration between nursing and psychology learners, promoting shared decision-making, empathy, and clinical competence. Through dual-perspectives, learners gain practical experience in therapeutic communication, stigma reduction, and trauma-informed care, increasing confidence, competence, and a collaborative workforce ready to respond to young people in crisis. The purpose of our project is to develop and evaluate a virtual simulation that allows nursing students to conduct a suicide risk assessment and co-create a safety plan with a young client in the community setting, uniquely offering dual perspectives from both the nurse and client.

Key Milestones Achieved:
Significant foundational milestones have been achieved during the first six months of the project, establishing a strong basis for the successful development and implementation of the virtual simulation. An interprofessional partnership between the faculties of nursing and psychology at Lakehead University has been formalized, bringing together complementary expertise to collaboratively lead the design, implementation, and evaluation of the virtual simulation. Planning meetings have facilitated shared decision-making, interdisciplinary collaboration, and the integration of best practices in suicide risk assessment, simulation pedagogy, and nursing and mental health education.

The project leads (JD, CS, AM) have developed the simulation's overarching learning objectives, case scenario, and has initiated the co-creation of the simulation script in partnership with a youth, ensuring the simulation content reflects both current evidence and lived experience. To strengthen the simulation's authenticity and educational relevance, the case scenario was successfully piloted as an in-person simulation involving undergraduate nursing learners in March 2026. Participant and facilitators feedback and reflections have been used to refine the learning objectives, case scenario design, and script, providing valuable insights for the development of the virtual simulation.

Planning for the virtual simulation production is underway. The project leads have begun evaluating simulation production elements, including filming options, technology requirements, and potential host platforms, to identify a high-quality and feasible options that will support learner engagement and sustainability. An evaluation plan is underway building off the in-person simulation evaluation, the project team has drafted the design, questions, and identified measurement instruments (suicide

knowledge and skills questionnaire; student satisfaction and self-confidence in learning scale) aligning with the project intended outcomes. Together, these project milestones have established a strong foundation for the next phases of the project.

Progress Toward Project Deliverables

Phase	Deliverable	Description	Proposed Completion Date	Status
Planning				
Development meetings	Meetings held with team	Initial planning sessions with nursing, psychology, technology leads & content experts	Dec. 2025	Completed
Recruit individuals with lived experience	Youth engaged	Content will be developed through co-creation with individuals with lived experience	Dec. 2025	Ongoing
Content/script development	Simulation storyboard	Co-design simulation content/script with educators, content experts & individual with lived experience	Jan. 2026	Ongoing
Companion Guide	Companion Guide developed	Companion Guide provides preparatory materials, resources & activities to adequately to prepare learners for virtual simulation	Feb. 2026	Revised timeline to August 2026
Ethics approval	Ethical approval is obtained	Obtain ethical approval from Lakehead University's Research Ethics Board (REB)	Feb. 2026	Revised timeline to Sept. 2026
Implementation				
Filming	Recorded simulation segments	Simulation segments filmed & edited	Feb. 2026	Revised timeline August 2026
Formatted to simulation platform	Module design	Instructional design, interface creation, digital integration	March 2026	Revised timeline August 2026
Pilot test	Internal testing	Pilot test module with group of learners for functionality & clarity	March 2026	Revised timeline to September 2026
Evaluation				

Develop evaluation plan	Evaluation plan	Robust evaluation plan is developed to evaluate	Jan. 2026	In progress
Pre/post testing	Learner surveys developed & disseminated	Evaluate learner knowledge, confidence & self-efficacy conducting SRA & developing a safety plan	April 2026	In progress
Data analysis	Evaluation report	Analyze evaluation data using statistical & thematic approaches	May 2026	Revised timeline
Knowledge Dissemination				
Conference presentation	Submit conference abstract	Submit & present findings at nursing education/simulation conferences	Spring/summer 2026	Revised timeline to 2027
Manuscript	Manuscript development & submission	Innovation & outcome shared in peer-reviewed journal	Summer 2026	Revised timeline to 2027
Share with partners	Open access virtual simulation	Module accessible to other clinical & academic partners	Summer 2026	Revised timeline to fall 2026

Next Six Months

During the next six months, the project will transition from development to production. Building on the collaborative design work completed to date, the project leads will finalize the simulation script, branching scenario, and scripts informed by pilot findings and stakeholder feedback. Production activities, including filming, editing, and integration within the selected virtual simulation platform, will be undertaken to create an immersive and sustainable nursing educational resource. At the same time, the evaluation design and implementation plan will be finalized to support pilot testing and assessment of learner outcomes.

Continued engagement with nursing, psychology, and youth partners will ensure the simulation reflects current evidence, authentic lived experience, and best practices in suicide risk assessment and intervention. Although the project is behind the initial proposed schedule due to various factors, the project leads are excited to continue into the next phase of the project bringing the virtual simulation to fruition with the support of the project team.

Financial Report:

Grant funds have not been used during the first six months of the project. During this period, the team prioritized foundational activities such as interprofessional collaboration, co-design with a youth partner, simulation development, in-person simulation pilot testing, and evaluation planning. These activities were supported through in-kind contributions from the project team and Lakehead University resources. As the project moves into simulation production, filming, platform development, and formal evaluation, expenditures will increase consistent with the approved budget.