



COMPLICATIONS BOX

A Collection of Distractors, Disruptors, Twists in Simulation Scenarios

Introduction

"Complications Box" is designed as a toolkit for instructors to provide the participants with an idea of the unpredictability of real-world professional situations. With this toolkit, simulations can move beyond linear progression, encouraging students to navigate the unexpected, just as they would in real-life professional contexts.

External Environmental Factors:

1. **Loud Background Noise:** Alarms, announcements, or nearby conversations interrupting the interaction.
2. **Other Staff Interruptions:** Another nurse or doctor needing urgent input from the nurse.
3. **Family Members Intervening:** A family member stepping in with questions, concerns, or complaints.
4. **Emergency Situation Nearby:** A medical emergency involving another patient diverting the nurse's attention.
5. **Overcrowded Space:** The room being shared with other patients or staff limiting privacy and focus.

Patient-Related Factors:

6. **Patient's Emotional State:** The patient is angry, fearful, or crying, making it harder to engage in a calm conversation.
7. **Distracted Patient:** The patient is on their phone, watching TV, or not fully engaged in the discussion.
8. **Patient Denial or Resistance:** The patient outright refuses to discuss their condition or treatment.

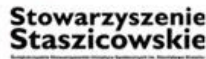
9. **Language Barrier:** Difficulty communicating due to language differences or lack of an interpreter.
 10. **Cognitive Impairment:** The patient has dementia, delirium, or is otherwise unable to fully comprehend the conversation.
 11. **Pain or Discomfort:** The patient is too uncomfortable to focus on the discussion.
 12. **Non-Adherence Excuses:** The patient keeps deflecting by providing justifications or excuses for not following recommendations.
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Nurse-Related Factors:

13. **Time Constraints:** The nurse is rushed and unable to give the patient undivided attention.
 14. **Fatigue or Burnout:** The nurse is physically or mentally exhausted, impacting focus and empathy.
 15. **Technical Jargon:** The nurse inadvertently uses terms the patient doesn't understand, causing confusion or frustration.
 16. **Assumptions or Biases:** The nurse assumes the patient understands, agrees, or will comply without confirming.
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Technological and Logistical Issues:

17. **Electronic Health Records Glitch:** Issues with accessing the patient's records or slow systems delaying the conversation.
 18. **Equipment Malfunction:** A blood pressure cuff, monitor, or other tool fails during the interaction.
 19. **Medication Availability Issue:** The patient's prescribed medication is unavailable, prompting additional discussion.
 20. **Phone Interruptions:** The nurse's phone or pager goes off repeatedly during the interaction.
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Unexpected Patient Behavior:

21. **Sudden Emotional Outburst:** The patient becomes unexpectedly upset or angry during the conversation.
 22. **Change in Condition:** The patient suddenly becomes unwell, requiring immediate medical attention.
 23. **Non-Cooperative Attitude:** The patient refuses to answer questions or participate in the discussion.
 24. **Personal Disclosure:** The patient shares unrelated but emotionally heavy personal issues that sidetrack the conversation.
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Interpersonal Dynamics:

25. **Mistrust:** The patient expresses distrust toward the nurse or the healthcare system.
 26. **Conflict:** Disagreement between the patient and nurse regarding treatment or care priorities.
 27. **Cultural Misunderstandings:** Cultural differences in communication or expectations leading to misalignment.
 28. **Family Disputes:** Family members arguing about the patient's care plan in the presence of the nurse.
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Twists or Surprises:

29. **Incorrect Medical History:** The patient reveals information that conflicts with their documented history.
30. **Hidden Diagnosis:** The patient shares a previously unmentioned or undiagnosed health condition.
31. **Non-Disclosed Medication:** The patient reveals they're taking alternative or unprescribed medications.
32. **Financial Concerns:** The patient discloses they can't afford the prescribed treatment or medication.



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33. **Unexpected Test Results:** The nurse receives surprising lab results during the conversation.

34. **Legal or Social Issues:** The patient mentions legal, housing, or social problems affecting their care.