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St. Lukes simulator helps medical personnel train for emergencies

ONTARIO -- Ambulance crews and other medical personnel can now train for how to treat patients, exhibiting a variety of symptoms, in an emergency situation without needing to have an actual person there.

While they still use a mannequin, new technology has made the simulator “Sim Man” to be more life-like.

Hal Iverson, a nurse and paramedic providing technical support for Air St. Luke’s Regional Education and Simulation Lab, said computers and simulation technology have progressed to the point that the mannequin can mimic human conditions and responses such as pulse, breathing and speech.



Jytone Pickens (left) and Shirley Halsey, EMT students at Treasure Valley Community College, check a ‘patient’ during a training in the Regional Education and Simulation Lab from Air St. Lukes. Their patient is actually a high-tech mannequin that can simulate a variety of human symptoms and functions.

Iverson assisted Tammye Erdmann, RN and REAL coordinator, at Treasure Valley Community College Saturday for a basic EMT class.

Sim Man can be programmed to exhibit certain symptoms, such as heart attacks, which aids students being trained identify and begin treatment, Iverson said.

“We can simulate a true heart attack,”he said. “Students can talk with the mannequin, hook it to heart monitors, check blood pressures and listen to lung sounds.”

Iverson admitted he is the voice of Sim Man, speaking from the front of the converted ambulance over a microphone, with the sound coming out of the mannequin’s mouth. Sim Man is also miked to pick up the students’ voices. Iverson also programs the mannequin by computer from his post.

The mobile lab was a former ambulance at Air St. Lukes and became a training unit when St. Lukes updated equipment. It is equipped with a generator, which provides power for the simulator, and also heating and cooling.

“We’re getting more requests from schools and hospitals all the time,” Iverson said, adding there are more requests for training than they can do.