Developing Educational Strategy Through Scholarship: Reflections from Simulation-Based and Interprofessional Education

Context

In 2023, I was appointed to lead the development of two educational strategies: one for Simulation-Based Education (SBE) and one for Interprofessional Education (IPE). Although the strategies addressed different educational priorities, developing interprofessional simulation-based education highlighted the broader structures and processes needed to support both SBE and IPE.

For SBE, this challenge was particularly evident within decentralised educational environments. While professional standards guide the delivery of high-quality SBE, they offer less direction on how SBE should be governed, coordinated and sustained when responsibility sits across multiple healthcare programmes rather than within a central simulation centre. Similar challenges were evident within IPE. Existing frameworks describe the principles and competencies underpinning IPE, but putting these into practice across different healthcare disciplines remains complex.

We presented the resulting SBE and IPE strategies at the Association for Simulated Practice in Healthcare (ASPiH) Conference in 2024. The full strategies were subsequently published in *The Clinical Teacher* (IPE; Alghanaim *et al*., 2025a) and *Advances in Simulation* (SBE; Alghanaim *et al*., 2025b); full references are provided in the reference list. Publication of the SBE strategy also led to an invited presentation at the ASPiH Simulation Journal Club in 2026.

What did we do?

The development of both strategies began by drawing on the literature, professional standards and educational frameworks to identify an initial set of strategic statements. I led this work as part of an interdisciplinary research team. These statements then formed the basis of a three-round e-Delphi study undertaken between 2023 and 2024.

Across each round, participants were able to accept, reject and refine the statements, as well as propose new ones. This enabled the final strategies to reflect a range of perspectives rather than those of the research team alone. Participants included academics and students from our institution, alongside healthcare professionals and academics from national and international contexts, bringing local, national and international perspectives to the process.

The e-Delphi resulted in two evidence-informed strategies. The SBE strategy comprised 39 statements across eight priority areas, while the IPE strategy comprised 28 statements setting out priorities for the development and implementation of IPE.

Critical Reflection

Before undertaking the study, I viewed consensus building primarily as a way of establishing agreement around strategic priorities. However, the process showed me that it could also provide a way of bringing different perspectives into the development of those priorities. The involvement of academics, students and healthcare professionals from local, national and international contexts meant that the strategies were shaped by a range of perspectives. For me, this reinforced the value of inclusive consensus building when developing educational strategy.

Developing the SBE strategy also changed how I thought about the role of professional standards. Although I was already familiar with established standards for high-quality SBE, I began to recognise that these provide limited guidance on how simulation should be organised and sustained within a decentralised educational setting. Developing the strategy therefore required me to think beyond

the quality of individual simulation activities and consider the wider organisational factors that support their delivery, including governance, communication, accessibility, resources and sustainability.

The most significant learning came after the strategies were developed. Translating the work into publishable scholarship was more demanding than I had anticipated. The peer-review process challenged me to think beyond how the strategies had been developed and articulate more clearly why they were needed, what they could contribute and how they might be relevant to others working in different educational contexts. This made me think differently about the wider relevance of the work and what it meant to move from developing an educational strategy to making a scholarly contribution.

I also learned that achieving wider dissemination did not necessarily mean that the strategies would be taken forward in practice. The work was presented at the ASPiH Conference and, following publication, I was invited to discuss the SBE strategy at the ASPiH Simulation Journal Club. While these provided valuable opportunities for scholarly engagement, I began to question what was needed for that engagement to move beyond dissemination and towards use in practice.

This experience challenged my assumptions about the relationship between scholarship, dissemination and impact. Looking back, I had assumed a relatively linear relationship between dissemination and impact: that making rigorous, evidence-informed strategies available would lead to engagement and, ultimately, influence practice. Exploring the literature on knowledge mobilisation helped me to make sense of why this was not necessarily the case. Levin (2013) describes research use as a social and organisational process shaped by relationships and context, rather than something that happens simply because research has been published. More recent literature also highlights the capacity, structures and support needed for knowledge to influence practice (Golhasany and Harvey, 2023). This became clearer to me following the ASPiH Journal Club, when a colleague who attended the session later contacted me to explore adapting and adopting the SBE strategy at their university. This highlighted the role that dialogue and continued engagement can play in moving scholarship beyond dissemination towards potential use in practice.

Reflecting on my own practice, I realised that I had devoted considerable attention to developing consensus about what the strategies should contain, but comparatively less to what would happen afterwards. Although I was familiar with theories of change and had experience of leading change at local level, I found applying this knowledge to strategy development across a wider university context more challenging. In particular, I had given less consideration to how the strategies would be taken forward after publication and who needed to be involved in their implementation. Changes in senior leadership after the strategies were developed affected the continuity of these discussions and highlighted the importance of sustained organisational engagement. This has changed how I think about educational leadership and scholarly impact, particularly the additional complexity involved in moving from leading change locally to leading strategy development across a wider institutional context.

The most important lesson for me as an educational leader has therefore been that developing evidence-informed strategies and achieving consensus are only part of the process. I no longer see publication as an endpoint, but as part of a wider process through which educational scholarship can begin to influence practice.

Implications for Practice

This experience has changed how I would approach similar work. I would now consider dissemination and implementation from the outset, identifying who needs to engage with the strategy, who could champion it and what organisational conditions would be needed to support its use. I would also build opportunities for continued dialogue and review into the process, recognising that educational strategies may need to be interpreted and adapted for different organisational contexts.

Next Steps

Sharing the SBE and IPE strategies through the Teaching Academy will make them more accessible to colleagues across the University and create further opportunities for dialogue and engagement. I also plan to explore recent interest from another university in adapting the SBE strategy. This will allow me to consider how the strategy can be interpreted and applied in a different organisational context, and how its influence and impact might be evaluated as it moves from dissemination towards potential adoption and implementation.

This experience has made me think more about what happens after educational strategies are developed and published. In particular, I am interested in how evidence-informed strategies move into practice, what supports sustainable change and how their impact can be evaluated. These are questions I would like to explore further through my future work.

References:

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