

Psychological safety in simulation training:

Ensuring psychological safety during a simulation training scenario is crucial for creating an environment where participants feel comfortable to learn, take risks, and engage fully.

Here are some practical steps you can implement:

✓ Before the Simulation

1. Set clear expectations

- Explain the purpose of the simulation: learning, not evaluation
- Emphasise that mistakes are part of the process and will not be penalised

2. Create ground rules

- Respect for all participants
- Confidentiality: what happens in the simulation stays within the group
- Encourage curiosity and questions

3. Brief participants

- Outline the scenario and objectives
- Address any concerns or anxieties upfront
- Allow time for questions before starting

✓ During the simulation

4. Model supportive behaviour

- Facilitators should demonstrate empathy and openness
- Avoid judgmental language; use constructive feedback

5. Monitor emotional cues

- Watch for signs of stress or discomfort
- Offer breaks if needed

6. Encourage collaboration

- Frame challenges as team problems, not individual failures
- Reinforce positive contributions



✓ **After the Simulation**

7. **Structured debrief**

- Start with positives: “What went well?”
- Use open-ended questions: “What did you learn?” rather than “What went wrong?”
- Normalise mistakes as learning opportunities

8. **Provide psychological support**

- Offer one-on-one follow-up if someone seems distressed
- Share/signpost resources for stress management or counselling if appropriate

Useful resources:

Several useful resources are available on psychological safety and related topics on the NHS Learn website and can be accessed at this link: [Resource details](#)

