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Sarasota Memorial Welcomes SimBaby to Hospital's High-Tech Family

Come see what this baby can do!

SARASOTA, FL -- Just in time for Mother's Day, Sarasota Memorial Health Care System welcomed its newest arrival — "SimBaby."

While the new "baby" breathes, coughs, cries and otherwise acts like an infant, it's actually a high-tech computer simulator designed to provide hospital staff with the safest, state-of-the-art training for newborn and pediatric emergencies.

The portable, advanced patient simulator has the realistic anatomy and clinical functionality of an infant. With lifelike airways, breathing patterns, circulation features and cardiac rhythms, SimBaby can simulate a wide range of critical conditions, including abnormal respiration, collapsed lung and gastric distention, to name a few. Caregivers must quickly respond to simulated scenarios, performing an array of high-tech, high-touch interventions — suctioning, intubation, gastric and chest tube insertion, defibrillation and IV infusion among them.

One of SimBaby's most important interactive features is automatic video debriefing, which offers nurses and physicians real-time, detailed feedback on their performance.

"SimBaby gives staff a unique opportunity to practice the most effective treatments in a hands-on yet risk-free environment," said Dawn Oder-Colletti, RN, clinical educator in the Patient Safety Simulation Lab. "Simulation helps advance caregivers' skills by preparing them for the unexpected and allowing them to evaluate their decisions and actions immediately."

The baby mannequin, which was introduced at a special demonstration Tuesday, May 6, is the newest addition to the hospital's computer simulation family, joining two adult mannequins that "live" in the training lab, which opened in 2006.

The lab, the adult simulators and the recent purchase of the \$40,000 SimBaby all were made possible through grants from the Bradenton-based business Intertape Polymer Group, the Roberta Leventhal Sudakoff Foundation, the Harry Sudakoff Foundation and Sarasota Memorial Healthcare Foundation, Inc.

"On behalf of our Board of Trustees, I would like to thank our donors, who through their generosity, have helped provide this important technology to enhance the safety and care of pediatric patients," said Alexandra Quarles, CFRE, president, CEO and trustee of Sarasota Memorial Healthcare Foundation, Inc.

The baby mannequin was produced by the Laerdal Medical Corporation based in Wappingers Falls, N.Y.

"Because Sarasota Memorial is the only hospital in Sarasota delivering babies and providing inpatient pediatrics and level III neonatal intensive care, it's critical that we stay at the forefront of the most effective and advanced treatments for children," said CEO Gwen MacKenzie. "SimBaby is truly the latest generation of patient-safe care."

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