Simulation-based learning as a gateway to care professions

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Background The healthcare sector faces a growing workforce shortage driven by rising care demands, population aging, and professional attrition. The Interreg Flanders–Netherlands StimulanZ project **developed and evaluated exploratory and experiential workshops for secondary school students** to **increase enrollment in healthcare education** and make healthcare professions more attractive.

Development of the workshops

3 learning formats (rotation)

Simulation → 360° VR learning experience → Clinical skills session

Scan to access the VR experience:

hogeschool vives

Implementation of the workshops:

- West-Flanders secondary schools (Belgium)
  313 workshop participants
  (Grade 2-3: n=175/Grade 4-7: n=138)

Evaluation of the workshops

- Online questionnaire
  - Experience survey
  - AIMS (Healthcare subscale): PRE & POST
  - Analysis: SPSS

Exploratory and Experiential Workshops Strengthens Positive Attitudes Toward Healthcare Careers

High Engagement

Positive evaluations across all learning formats

59-67%

Increased Interest in Healthcare Careers

Strong immediate interest across all learning formats

>50%

Career Inspiration

Inspired toward healthcare careers

Pre-Post Intervention Analysis

Pre–post analyses showed high baseline interest in healthcare professions. Only the **desire to learn more about healthcare professions** decreased significantly ($t(153) = 5.78$, $p < .001$)

Conclusion

- Simulation-based orientation is highly valued
- Positive attitudes toward healthcare professions are reinforced
- Year 4 appears to be the optimal timing for career inspiration activities





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https://interregvlaned.eu/stimulanz/over-ons

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