

Virtual Patients

2006-present

The Virtual Patient project uses virtual human technology to create realistic lifelike characters to train future clinicians in therapeutic interview skills. The use of virtual patient technology is not meant to replace human standardized patients but augment live actor programs with virtual characters that are available 24/7 and can portray a multitude of characters and conditions that might be difficult for actors to represent or repeat with success.

The project began as an offshoot from the virtual human project when researchers from ICT and the USC Keck School of Medicine Department of Psychiatry won a USC Provost Teaching with Technology Grant. The success of this effort led additional research efforts involving virtual patients.

Current efforts include the development of virtual patients for military specific scenarios for the U.S. Army Simulation and Training Technology Center (STTC) and a collaboration with the Center for Innovation and Research for Veterans and Military Families at the USC School of Social Work and the U.S. Army Telemedicine and Advanced Research Technology Center (TATRC) to apply virtual patients to train social workers in military specific issues. These can include struggles with family life, return to service and post-traumatic stress.

Future efforts include a virtual patient system that can be delivered over the web and mobile devices and the development of a virtual patient toolkit to allow for the creation customized characters for clinical skills training and practice.



At the University of Southern California Institute for Creative Technologies leaders in artificial intelligence, graphics, virtual reality and narrative advance low-cost immersive techniques and technologies to solve problems facing service members, students and society.