



Annual Course Report: St George's Simulation & Skills (GAPS)

St George's, Epsom & St Helier University Hospitals and Health Group (GESH)

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With Sincere Thanks to our extended faculty for their ongoing contributions to simulation, human factors, and patient safety education.

Introduction & Report Summary

This report provides a comprehensive summary of the course portfolio, activities, and strategic developments delivered at the George's Advanced Patient Simulation and Skills Centre (GAPS). The centre delivers high-quality interprofessional and specialty-specific educational programmes for undergraduate trainees, postgraduate doctors, nursing teams, allied health professionals (AHPs), and dental staff across the Trust and wider regional networks.

Our Vision:

To empower healthcare professionals through world-class simulation, skills training, and human factors education—fostering an environment where continuous learning, interprofessional collaboration, and psychological safety drive exceptional patient safety and care excellence across our hospitals and health group.

"Our goal is to create a psychologically safe, highly realistic environment where multidisciplinary teams can learn together, refine their technical and non-technical skills and practice the application of human factors principles to drive healthcare system improvement, patient and staff wellbeing. Hearing from staff about their real-world implementation of skills, techniques and approaches developed in simulation, is the most rewarding part of our work."— The GAPS Team

Key Achievements Summary (2025/2026)

- **Undergraduate Simulation & Skills:** Delivered core tariff-funded interactive simulation and procedural skill modules to hundreds of medical and healthcare students (e.g., Final Year Medical School Simulation, Surgical Skills, and PA workshops).
- **Postgraduate Simulation & Skills:** Provided curriculum-aligned, high-acuity, and multidisciplinary training across multiple specialties, including MEERKATS 1 & 2, HALO, IMT3, CST, Cardiology, and Neonatal Care.
- **Internal Free-to-Access Staff Courses:** Offered an extensive range of skill enhancement and safety workshops at zero cost to internal Trust staff, targeting critical care, obstetrics, end-of-life care, tracheostomy care, and human factors.
- **Externally Funded & Fee-Paying Programmes:** Expanded regional and national reach through specialized, income-generating, or externally commissioned initiatives (e.g., CAR-T KITE, ATLS, ETC, Echocardiography, and Train the Trainer).
- **Dental Foundation & Continuous Professional Development (CPD):** Delivered 100+ study days serving over 1,300 dental foundation trainees, dental core trainees, therapists, and primary care practitioners.

Service Overview & Leadership Team

GAPS is committed to fostering a culture of lifelong learning, interprofessional collaboration, and systemic patient safety across the Trust. Utilising National Health Service England (NHSE) education funding (tariff) alongside internal and external funding streams, resources and learning spaces are made freely accessible to our internal workforce.

The GAPS Clinical Education and Simulation Team

The GAPS Clinical Education and Simulation Team provides educational leadership, faculty development, and simulation expertise across St George's clinical services. Working in partnership with staff across acute care, intensive care, emergency medicine, surgery, oncology, and medical wards, the team supports learning, service improvement, and patient care in complex clinical environments.

Drawing on expertise in education, human factors, systems thinking, psychology, and the behavioural sciences, the team helps create effective learning environments that support staff development in challenging clinical contexts. Through faculty development and collaborative working, the team develops networked expertise across professional and organisational boundaries, connecting clinician groups, strengthening local educational leadership, and building sustainable communities of practice. Informed by scholarship on relational expertise, relational agency, collective competence, and social learning systems, the team acts as a catalyst for organisational learning by enabling knowledge sharing, cross-boundary collaboration, and collective problem-solving to improve patient care.

Leadership & Core Operations Team

- **Nicholas Gosling:** Associate Director of Education
- **Dr Asanga Fernando:** Consultant Cancer Liaison Psychiatrist, Honorary Senior Lecturer, GAPS Clinical Director, Simulation Programme Director, NHS England (London)
- **Huon Snelgrove:** Medical Educationalist
- **Ylenia De Felici:** Site Lead for GAPS, Simulation & Skills Specialist, Haematology & Oncology Practice Educator
- **James Godber:** Simulation & Skills Specialist, Registered Speech and Language Therapist
- **Gary Allen:** Senior Technician & Engineer, Operating Department Practitioner
- **Darron Hazelby:** Clinical Skills Coordinator
- **Philippa Newman:** Lead Administrator
- **Manana Mudhir:** Centre Administrator
- **Ivy Hagan:** Dental Coordinator
- **Yoni Shivalilla:** Dental Coordinator
- **Caspian Priest / Olivia Padfield:** Simulation Fellows

Advancing Patient Safety Through Simulation

All GAPS courses are strategically mapped against national and international quality and safety frameworks to ensure consistent, high-impact learning outcomes:

- **NHS Patient Safety Strategy and Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF).** Our evidence-based educational approach integrates Human Factors and Ergonomics principles, promoting systems thinking and a supportive culture focused on learning and reflection rather than blame. Our work often integrates optimisation of clinical and non-technical skills with explicit consideration of broader works systems and interactions. This includes in-situ simulation to optimise emergency responses, identify latent safety threats, and test or optimise systems or processes. Wherever possible, our work aims to improve staff confidence and skill, patient safety and system performance.
- **Commission on Education and Training for Patient Safety:** Incorporates human factors, experiential learning without fear of blame, interprofessional integration, and safety leadership.
- **WHO Patient Safety Curriculum Guide:** Embeds safe, supportive, challenging, and experiential learning environments with structured debriefing.
- **National Framework for Simulation-Based Education (SBE):** Operates under robust governance, HEE quality assurance, multi-professional faculty development, and strategic resource allocation.
- **ASPiH Standards (2023):** Upholds core values of equity, diversity, inclusion (EDI), sustainability, psychological safety, evidence-based facilitation, and robust course evaluation.
- **National Strategic Vision for Simulation & Immersive Technologies:** Drives workforce modernization, patient involvement, clinical system testing, and evidence-based education.

Partnerships and Educational Collaboration:

As a team dedicated to meeting the needs of multidisciplinary learners, we thrive on collaborating with others to design, facilitate, and deliver innovative educational programs. We deeply value our strong connections with educators across the GESH Group and beyond.

Key examples of our collaborative approach include:

- **Supporting Nursing Preceptorships:** We proudly support nurses undertaking preceptorship training by reserving places on our *Meerkats* and *Medical School* training programs. We also welcome practice nurse educators to join our faculty, bringing invaluable skills, clinical knowledge, and hands-on experience to our learners.
- **Driving Patient Safety:** As core members of the Deteriorating Patient Group at St George's Hospital, we gain vital insights into patient safety, patient experience, and frontline clinical practice. This connection ensures our existing courses remain relevant and up-to-date while helping us prioritize and develop new programs for our most vulnerable patients.
- **Supporting Implementation of Group-Wide PSIRF Training:** Across 2025/26, we collaborated with the Group Head of Nursing (Quality and Safety Governance) and the Eleanor Power Simulation Centre team at Epsom Hospital to facilitate the GESH-wide Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF) training.
- **Engaging with the Wider Simulation Community:** Through our active participation in the London Simulation Network, we share our work while learning from external innovations. This community of practice provides fresh perspectives on simulation, a collaborative space for problem-solving, and access to research, emerging trends, and new educational opportunities.

Attendance & Delivery Summary (2025/2026)

Category	Courses Run (Avg/Year)	Total Participants (25/26)	Primary Target Audience
Undergraduate Simulation & Skills	56 sessions	660	Final/penultimate medical students, PAs
Postgraduate Simulation & Skills	43 sessions	389	IMT1–3, FY1–2, SpRs, CST, Paediatric/Neonatal trainees
Internal Courses (Trust Staff)	88 sessions	1,080	Multi-professional Trust staff (Doctors, Nurses, Midwives, AHPs, HCSWs)
Externally Funded / Fee-Paying	31 sessions	441	External/Regional clinicians, Psychiatrists, Physios, Educators
Dental Foundation & CPD	106 courses	1,313	Dentists, Dental Therapists, Dental Core Trainees, DCPs
Total Portfolio	324 sessions	3,883	Interprofessional Healthcare Workforce

Course Portfolio

1. Undergraduate Simulation & Skills

- **Final Year Medical School Simulation:** Full-day acute care and crisis management training.
- **Final Year Surgical Simulation:** Half-day recognition and management of acute postoperative emergencies.
- **Surgical Skills for Medical Students:** Full-day practical session covering debridement, suturing, and knot tying on fresh tissue.
- **Undergraduate Clinical Skills Drop-In:** Weekly self-directed practice for core bedside clinical skills.
- **Physician Associate Wound Debridement & Suturing:** 2-hour hands-on workshop covering wound management and suturing.

2. Postgraduate Simulation & Skills

- **MEERKATS 1:** Interprofessional simulation on managing deteriorating patients for IMT1/FY1 doctors, nurses, and HCSWs.
- **MEERKATS 2:** Advanced team simulation for IMT2/FY2 doctors, senior nurses, and HCSWs.
- **High Acuity Low Occurrence (HALO) Conference:** High-acuity simulation for rare emergency procedures (clamshell thoracotomy, surgical airway, etc.).
- **MSAS Emergency Medicine Skills Day:** Half-day procedural skills refresher for non-training Emergency Medicine Specialty Doctors.
- **Functional Neurosurgery Teaching Day:** Hands-on spinal anatomy, surgical drilling, and laminectomy simulation.
- **International Medical Graduate (IMG) Communication Simulation:** Communication, escalation, and cultural nuance workshop.
- **IMT3 Simulation:** Advanced medical emergency simulation, palliative communication, and chest drain training.
- **Trauma Team Leader Course:** Clinical decision-making and leadership simulation during acute trauma resuscitations.
- **London School of Paediatrics (LSP) Neonatal Crash Course:** Transition training into tertiary neonatology for Level 1 paediatric trainees.
- **Core Surgical Training (CST) Skills:** Technical procedural skills course for first- and second-year core surgical trainees.
- **Cardiology Simulation:** Acute cardiac emergency management, ECG interpretation, and hemodynamic monitoring.
- **Procedural Skills for SpRs:** Ultrasound-guided central/arterial lines, chest drains, and lumbar punctures for senior medical registrars.

3. Internal Courses (Free for GESH Trust Staff)

- **Anaesthetic Emergency Simulations for ODPs:** Perioperative emergency management for Operating Department Practitioners.
- **ST3 Paediatric Communication:** Communication simulation on handling difficult family conversations.
- **Masterclass in Chest Drains:** Practical chest drain insertion and post-procedural management.
- **TEP Talk: Challenging Conversations:** Training on Treatment Escalation Plans and DNACPR discussions.
- **CaPABLE Communication in Cancer:** Supporting patients living with cancer and their families.
- **Basic Tracheostomy Boot Camp:** 3-hour fundamental tracheostomy care and emergency management.
- **Advanced Tracheostomy Boot Camp:** 1-day course on complex airways, weaning, and emergency algorithms.
- **MRCS Practice Kit Session:** Practical surgical exam preparation session.
- **Deteriorating Child:** Simulation for pediatric nurses on PEWS and early intervention in respiratory/shock states.
- **Impella Study Day:** Interactive training on Impella mechanical circulatory support devices.
- **Focused Skill Session - CVC:** Ultrasound-guided central venous line placement.
- **Focused Skill Session - eFONA:** Emergency Front-of-Neck Access scalp-bougie-tube training.
- **Focused Skill Session - ED Skills:** High-yield emergency procedural skills for junior ED doctors.
- **Transfer of the Critically Ill Patient:** Intra- and inter-hospital transport simulation for ICU nurses.
- **Polytrauma Practicalities Study Day:** Simulation and lectures on complex trauma management for ICU nurses.
- **PROMPT (Practical Obstetric Multi-Professional Training):** Multi-professional obstetric emergency simulation.
- **CaMhEIs (Cancer, Mental Health and End of Life Simulation):** Managing mental health comorbidities in end-of-life cancer patients.
- **Internal Cardiac Advanced Life Support (CALS):** Post-re sternotomy cardiac arrest protocol training.
- **Suturing for Midwives:** Perineal trauma repair techniques.
- **Catheterisation Study Day:** Male and female urethral catheterization techniques.
- **Acute Stroke Simulation:** Hyperacute stroke pathway, rapid assessment, and thrombolysis.
- **Systemic Anti-Cancer Therapy (SACT):** Safe administration of chemotherapy and handling toxicities.
- **Healthcare Support Worker (HCSW) Foundation:** Fundamental bedside clinical skills for HCSWs.

- **Internal Trauma Team Leader:** Leadership in major trauma resuscitations.
- **Paediatric Trauma Team Leader:** Resuscitation leadership for paediatric trauma.
- **Enhanced Resuscitation:** Pit-crew resuscitation model and post-ROSC care.
- **Cardiac Maternity HDU Course:** Managing Level 2 high-dependency pregnant patients with cardiac conditions.
- **CREST (Cardio Related Emergency Simulated Training):** Non-invasive ventilation, pacing, and cardioversion.
- **Endoscopy 'In-Situ' Training:** Management of unexpected emergencies within the endoscopy department. Twin aims of improving team based clinical & non-technical skills and identifying latent safety threats and potential areas for system optimisation and service improvement.
- **CCOT Study Day:** Acute assessment and rapid response skills for Critical Care Outreach Teams.
- **General ICU (GICU) Study Day:** Shift leadership and advanced ICU care for Band 6 nurses.
- **Obstetric Anaesthesia Human Factors:** Simulation for regional anaesthetic trainees.
- **ENT Essentials:** Emergency ENT airway, epistaxis, and foreign body management.
- **Anaesthetic Sim Emergencies:** High-fidelity simulation for novice anaesthetic trainees.
- **Sickle Cell Simulation:** Managing acute vaso-occlusive crises and pain management.
- **Priorities of Care of the Dying Person:** End-of-life care masterclass for nursing staff.
- **Leadership Development:** Leadership skills and self-awareness for emerging clinical leaders.
- **CIRCLE (Advanced Communication in Cancer):** Supporting cancer care pathways for Band 5 staff.
- **ITU Train the Trainer:** Mobile simulation delivery and systems-focused debriefing course for ICU staff.

4. Externally Funded & Fee-Paying Courses

- **In Their Shoes - Domestic Abuse Simulation Workshop:** Trauma-informed simulation response to domestic abuse.
- **ICB Widening Participation Event:** Simulation outreach event for young people exploring NHS careers.
- **Clinical Simulation Train the Trainer:** 2-day simulation pedagogy, scenario design, and debriefing course.
- **CAR-T KITE Simulation:** Managing CAR T-cell therapy pathways and complications (CRS, ICANS).
- **Wound Management for Psychiatrists:** Wound assessment, suturing, and stapling techniques.

- **Mental Health in Acute Care and Orthopaedics (MACOS):** Managing psychological needs in complex MSK/FND patients.
- **European Trauma Course (ETC):** Multidisciplinary trauma team communication and resuscitation.
- **Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS / ATNC):** Standardized emergency trauma management training.
- **External CALS:** Interprofessional cardiac surgery resuscitation course.
- **Echocardiography for Neonatologists:** Hands-on neonatal heart scanning using real patients.
- **On-Call Physiotherapist Simulation:** Acute respiratory emergency simulation for physical therapists.
- **Palliative Medicine DOPS Day:** Practical procedures (tracheostomy, NIV) and human factors.
- **Neonatal Advanced Cardio-Respiratory Course:** POCUS, NAVA ventilation, and difficult airway training.
- **Foundations of Intensive Care Medicine:** Introductory simulation and skills for new ICU doctors.
- **Laparoscopic Anti-Reflux Course:** Model-based surgical skill training and live theatre streaming.
- **Ultrasound-Assisted Lumbar Puncture (USS LP):** POCUS-guided lumbar puncture masterclass.

5. Dental Foundation & CPD Programmes

- **Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Portfolio:** 58 courses covering various primary/secondary dental topics.
- **Dental Foundation Training (DFT) Scheme:** 21 core study days for newly qualified dentists.
- **Dental Restorative Skills:** 6 targeted hands-on restorative dentistry workshops.
- **Dental Core Training (DCT):** 4 advanced study days for junior hospital dental officers.
- **Dental Therapy Foundation Training (DTFT):** 17 structured study days for dental therapists.



Overall Learner & Participant Feedback

Across all delivery streams, participant evaluations consistently highlight the high quality of immersive learning, practical relevance, and multi-professional collaboration provided by GAPS:

- Learners frequently praise the high-fidelity simulation rooms, anatomical models, and fresh tissue labs for mirroring real clinical settings without compromising patient safety.
- Participants consistently cite the non-judgmental debriefing sessions as the most valuable aspect of the training, noting that it builds clinical confidence, self-reflection, and critical thinking.
- Feedback emphasizes a stronger appreciation for non-technical skills, including situational awareness, clear communication frameworks, closed-loop delegation, and multidisciplinary trust.
- Medical, nursing, dental, and allied health trainees report significant improvements in procedural technique and decision-making when transitioning from classroom theory to acute ward or emergency management.

"The debriefing sessions and high-fidelity scenarios provided a safe, supportive space to practice complex decisions. It truly bridged the gap between theory and real ward practice, giving me much more confidence in managing acute clinical situations and working within a multidisciplinary team."

"Being able to practice rare, high-acuity procedures hands-on before encountering them in a real emergency was invaluable. The faculty provided constructive feedback that completely transformed how I approach crisis communication and delegation on shift."

Future Plans & Strategic Priorities (2026–2027)

To continuously elevate the quality, reach, and impact of simulation-based education across the Trust and beyond, GAPS has established the following strategic priorities for the upcoming period:

Inter-Trust Collaboration & Educational Scholarship (ESTH Alignment)

- Deepen partnership with Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals (ESTH) to co-design and harmonize cross-trust simulation initiatives, ensuring unified, high-quality standards of education across the GESH group.

Expansion of In-Situ and Translational Simulation Activity

- Improve the reach and fidelity of simulation-based offerings by increasing the amount of mobile and department-based "in-situ" simulations in wards, operating theatres, and emergency areas.
- Identify and support opportunities for the use of **Translational simulation** where simulation is used to identify latent safety threats, design, test and optimise processes, and supporting evidence-based quality improvement in real clinical environments.

Curriculum Alignment & Course Content Review

- Systematically review and update current course content to align with revised curricula, medical and nursing training frameworks, and evolving national standards.
- Ensure simulation scenarios and procedural skill workshops directly address updated core competencies and specialty milestone requirements.

Strategic Sponsorship & Commercial Partnership Development

- Actively explore corporate, educational, and medical technology sponsorships to support specialized courses and secure advanced equipment.

- Leverage external commercial partnerships to maintain low-cost or free access for internal Trust staff while expanding high-fidelity resources.

Expanding Regional Reach & Network Outreach

- Extend marketing and recruitment efforts beyond our immediate regional network to attract candidates from wider NHS trusts, primary care networks, and allied health sectors.
- Evaluate external candidate profiles and workforce demands to tailor off-site and regional educational offerings to broader healthcare needs.

Systematic Evaluation of Internal Staff Needs

- Conduct comprehensive trust-wide learning needs assessments across nursing, medical, dental, and AHP staff to identify emerging skill gaps.
- Tailor bespoke simulation sessions and drop-in skill sessions specifically addressing internal incident reports, clinical governance priorities, and staff feedback.

Faculty Development & Educator Empowerment

- Expand "Train the Trainer" offerings to build a robust pool of confident, multidisciplinary simulation debriefers and educators to ensure high-quality educational delivery.