

# Clinical Skills Center

One of the most anticipated areas in the Sorrell Center, the clinical skills center mirrors the type of innovation seen at the nation's top-ranked academic health science centers. The center features a ready room, 10 large exam rooms, six exam rooms, a hospital suite and two simulation suites. Inside, students will have many opportunities to hone their clinical skills. They will work with high-tech, life-size mannequins that breathe, speak, bleed and urinate. With computer programming, the mannequins – complete with heartbeats, pulses and lung and bowel sounds – also exhibit symptoms of disease and react to treatment.



**Patient simulators help students hone clinical skills.**

“The clinical skills laboratory grew out of the trend in medical education to train and evaluate students in clinical skills without subjecting patients to potential risks,” said Gerald Moore, M.D., senior associate dean for academic affairs, UNMC College of Medicine, and one of the visionaries of the clinical skills lab.

“For years, medical training was done by practicing skills on patients. While this was done with very careful supervision, it carried some potential risk for patients.”

“The idea is to make clinical learning experiences as real as possible,” said Paul Paulman, M.D., associate dean for clinical skills. “We’ve gone from four basic exam rooms to state-of-the-art technology. With the Sorrell Center, we will become one of the leaders in simulation – equaling or excelling the facilities found in institutions on either coast.”

Research shows that patient simulators enhance patient safety by providing students realistic learning opportunities that boost confidence and skill proficiency. The clinical skills lab will improve the clinical skills of students and enhance multidisciplinary training.

“We don’t practice in isolation, and we don’t want to teach in isolation,” Dr. Paulman said. The center features 16 outpatient rooms – 10 large rooms and six smaller rooms – and a hospital suite with eight beds. Each room is equipped with two video cameras and a microphone that provides digital video and audio recording and playback capability for teaching and critiquing students. Two rooms have glass windows for observation. An intercom system aids communication between faculty and students. One of the large rooms can be used as a simulated operating room or as a laboratory for technical instruction in which virtual reality is used to conduct clinical skills testing. Patti Carstens, who led the UNMC College of Nursing’s efforts to acquire patient simulators, said the goal for the Sorrell Center is to establish a schedule so simulators are available – on demand – to students to brush up on skills. “I want students to have opportunities to gain confidence and experience,” she said, “so when they walk into a patient’s room, it’s as if they’ve had that experience 1,000 times.”