

# Psychological First Aid: Student Guide

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Please be sure to complete the [online evaluation](#) after your simulation session!

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The **purpose** of this simulation-based activity is to practice psychological first aid (PFA) in a scenario with someone who is experiencing an emotional crisis. Learners will apply steps within the RAPID model of PFA to mitigate and stabilize crises and to triage the patient's needs.

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## Learning Objectives

By the end of this simulation-based experience, the learner will be able to...

1. Apply the steps of the RAPID model to provide PFA to someone who is in emotional distress.
  2. Apply the principles of triage to prioritize which needs to address.
  3. Provide basic emotional support interventions.
  4. Assess efficacy of intervention and need for additional referrals for resources.
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## Expectations

Learners are expected to arrive having (1) fully reviewed this Student Guide, (2) completed the assigned readings and module, and (3) completed the Pre-simulation Questions. All students are expected to have the Observer Form to use if assigned that role.

The simulation session will begin with a briefing, during which the facilitator will take attendance, assign roles, review expectations, review the learning objectives, and read the learner brief to begin the scenario. The clinical scenario will involve using the RAPID process of psychological first aid for an older patient with signs of psychological distress. Students are expected to understand the components of each step in the RAPID process. Use the reflection questions below to think of how you would approach each step with a patient. The scenario will be paused after each step of the RAPID process to switch roles, so 5 students will be in the role of nurse, while the others will be active observers. Everyone will practice SBAR report. The scenario will be followed by a debriefing session, in which the facilitator will guide the learners through reflective examination of the events and decisions that occurred during the scenario.

The briefing, scenario, and debriefing will take about 90 minutes.

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## Topics

- PFA principles and RAPID steps
  - Reflective listening
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- Therapeutic communication techniques
  - SBAR
  - Triage principles and protocols
  - Nursing process
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### Required Preparation (Readings and Learning Module)

Colino, S. (2020, September 22). The pandemic proves we all should know ‘psychological first aid.’ Here are the basics. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/wellness/pandemic-psychological-first-aid-anxiety/2020/09/21/7c68d746-fc23-11ea-9ceb-061d646d9c67\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/wellness/pandemic-psychological-first-aid-anxiety/2020/09/21/7c68d746-fc23-11ea-9ceb-061d646d9c67_story.html)

Ishado, E. (2020). *Psychological first aid: Emotional support during the Covid-19 pandemic* [Online learning module]. Center for Health Sciences Interprofessional Education, Research, and Practice (CHSIE-RP).

Ishado, E. & Buchanan, D. (2020). Psychological First Aid (PFA): Simulation Cheat Sheet.

Shah, K., Bedi, S., Onyeaka, H., Singh, R., & Chaudhari, G. (2020). The Role of Psychological First Aid to Support Public Mental Health in the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Cureus*, 12(6): e8821. DOI 10.7759/cureus.8821 Retrieved from <https://www.cureus.com/articles/32741-the-role-of-psychological-first-aid-to-support-public-mental-health-in-the-covid-19-pandemic>

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### Pre-simulation Questions

1. What does RAPID stand for?
  2. What are some strategies for building rapport with a patient in the primary care setting?
  3. List 3-5 reflective listening techniques.
  4. What are the 5 domains of functioning? How do you assess the differences between distress and dysfunction?
  5. How would you categorize your assessment information for prioritizing what should be addressed first?
  6. Name 2 specific strategies each for stabilization and mitigation (a specific action, not just a category).
  7. What does disposition mean? What domains or issues should you consider when planning disposition?
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### Observer Form

Learners who are not active participants in the scenario are expected to complete an Observer Form. Observers' insights offer key learning opportunities during debriefing. Have this form ready to fill out during the scenario.

## Psychological First Aid: Student Observer Form

**Instructions:** This Student Observer Form is to help you apply critical thinking as you watch the simulation and to prepare you to actively participate in the debriefing. In the left column, check off the behaviors/performance you observed. In the right column, take notes for the debriefing discussion.

Learning Objective	Notes (What went well? What could have gone differently?)
<input type="checkbox"/> Learning Objective 1: Apply the steps of the RAPID model to provide PFA to someone who is in emotional distress.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Learning Objective 2: Apply the principles of triage to prioritize which needs to address.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Learning Objective 3: Provide basic emotional support interventions.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Learning Objective 4: Assess efficacy of intervention and need for additional referrals for resources.	
What is one take away that you will incorporate into practice?	