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**Title:** Evaluation of a Virtual Reality Training Program for Foundation Dentists

**ABSTRACT:**

**Objectives** Assess how contemporary virtual reality (VR) technologies can be utilized to support the direct clinical care of Foundation Dentists (FDs). Evaluate the perceptions of FDs on VR training and its potential applications in dental foundation training (DFT).

**Methods** 10 Nissin Simodont Training units were used to evaluate 30 FDs undertaking a range of clinically related manual dexterity tasks. A 10 week longitudinal VR training programme was devised to improve FDs’ manual dexterity in relation to a number of dentally related tasks. Standardised baseline tasks were undertaken and graded as pass or fail using pre-set criteria, with each FD awarded a nominal score. FDs will be assessed at agreed points of the training year. As well as evaluating changes in technical ability, FDs perception of the benefits of Simodont Training and how it relates to real practice will be assessed. This will be conducted using an anonymized 14-part questionnaire completed by FDs on completion of their VR teaching sessions.

**Results** At baseline 64% of participants had no previous knowledge of the Simodont Training Unit. 1 user had previous experience of using a Simodont as an undergraduate student. 82% of FDs were unaware of the Simodont training unit’s functionality. All participants found the training sessions interesting. 89% felt that Simodont training would help to develop their own clinical practice. 96% of FDs felt that the opportunity to repeatedly practice procedures would be helpful. 86% of users agreed that training on the Simodont unit felt realistic.

**Conclusions** COVID- related restrictions has impacted on how we deliver care and training in dentistry. Throughout the pandemic digital technologies such as VR training have provided additional opportunities to enhance training. Embracing digital technologies could lead to changes in how postgraduate deaneries induct, train and assist FDs transitioning from the undergraduate to the postgraduate arena.