Athletic training educators strive to create classroom and laboratory learning environments that foster knowledge acquisition and skill development for application in clinical practice. The standardized patient (SP) provides an opportunity for students to apply knowledge and skills relating to conditions, illnesses, or injuries that occur infrequently in clinical practice (e.g., cervical spine management, drug or substance abuse).\textsuperscript{1,2} Athletic training students have reported that completion of an SP encounter was beneficial.\textsuperscript{3} Students reported the encounter was a realistic representation of clinical practice and was perceived as worthwhile.\textsuperscript{3}

Simulations provide realistic patient encounter scenarios that are frequently used to evaluate students’ clinical skills. Furthermore, simulations provide students with opportunities to evaluate and treat simulated patients with no adverse consequence if a mistake is made.\textsuperscript{4} Unfortunately, simulated scenarios are not typically consistent between student evaluations, since most are spontaneously created by an educator or clinical instructor. Standardized patients can provide consistency for student evaluations. An SP is trained to portray a case in a consistent manner for each student examiner. These encounters provide the opportunity to evaluate student performance directly, rather than inferring probable clinical performance behaviors from student responses to clinical case studies and laboratory activities.\textsuperscript{5}

Although SP encounters provide many benefits, they can be challenging and time-consuming for educators to create. The SPs must have accurate information when responding to questions regarding medical history, history of the present condition, signs and symptoms of the condition, and how the condition affects daily life activities and sport performance capabilities. The literature relating to creation of SP cases is limited. A “case” refers to the overall medical and social history, physical examination findings, and other relevant information. For example, if a head injury evaluation is needed, an SP case is developed to portray a “realistic” head injury scenario that requires the student to attain the following: patient history, physical findings, past medical history, and other information related to head injury assessment.

The purpose of this paper is to describe development of an SP case. A case template is provided for athletic training educators to use when developing SP cases.

**Key Points**

- The standardized patient encounter provides students with an opportunity for knowledge and skill acquisition in a realistic patient care context.

- Standardized patient case development includes writing a detailed account of a condition, illness, or injury from the perspective of the patient, including present and past medical history, social history, affect, and physical examination findings.

- Collaboration with clinicians to develop an SP case will ensure a high fidelity experience that will enhance the student’s didactic and clinical education.
The first step in developing an SP case is to specify the educational goals of the encounter. What do you want to assess and/or what should the student learn in the process of completing the case (e.g., obtaining a thorough history, selecting appropriate special tests, identifying potential differential diagnoses)? An SP case can meet several educational objectives. Ideally, each SP case could incorporate a range of knowledge and skill sets, which would allow students to demonstrate the ability to evaluate, develop, and implement a care plan. Once the educational goals are identified, the performance expectations of the students are determined. These SP case development considerations should be based on the students’ clinical experiences and level of progress through the athletic training education program (ATEP). The cases should require students to demonstrate technical, assessment, interpersonal, and critical thinking skills.

The second step in development of an SP case is creation of a template to organize the case information. The template is a document that provides a summary of the case information. We recommend that a template is used to ensure consistency among student evaluations, i.e., specified information that every student examiner should collect. The case template is presented in Table 1. All essential information needed to create an SP encounter is outlined in this case template along with an example of a case. The case template is a synopsis of the case. We do not permit student examiners or the SP portraying the case to see the case template. MedEdPORTAL, created by the Association of American Medical Colleges, can serve as a resource for development of SP cases and templates. This website is a free-access, peer-reviewed repository for medical and oral health teaching materials.

ATEP faculty members are typically responsible for development of the pertinent case information; clinicians can be consulted to assist in case development. For example, if a case is being developed to assess the clinical application of therapeutic ultrasound, a clinician who possesses expertise in administration of therapeutic ultrasound should be consulted. Case development often involves a team approach, i.e., faculty and