

## **“Piloting a VR Program Subscription for the Health and Medical Sciences at IUPUI**

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EmbodiedLabs VR (<https://embodiedlabs.com/>) is a virtual reality (VR) program geared towards developing empathy in health and medical professionals. The learned is immersed into a VR video where they are placed in the shoes of specific patients and experience scripted interactions with family, friends, and healthcare providers in order to get a better sense of how these patients are impacted by their conditions. EmbodiedLabs VR (<https://embodiedlabs.com/labs>) currently has the following 4 labs, each of which consist of 2-3 modules:

The Alfred Lab: a 74-year old African-American man with macular degeneration and high frequency hearing loss, as he spends time with family, visits the doctor, and receives a diagnosis.

The Beatriz Lab: a middle-aged Latina woman, as she progresses through early, middle, and late stage Alzheimer’s Disease.

The Clay Lab: a 66-year old veteran with stage IV, incurable lung cancer. End-of-life conversation.

The Dima Lab: a Lebanese-American immigrant living with symptoms of both Lewy Body Dementia and Parkinson’s disease as she transitions from receiving care at home to care in a residential community.

According to the IUSM Strategic Plan 2018-2022, Goal 7.2 states: “Become a national leader in the integration of advanced and emerging technologies into the training of medical students, residents and fellows” (IUSM Strategic Plan, 2018, p. 10). In keeping with this goal, and because the medical library had recently launched our VR service (Lilly et al., 2019), thinking of ways to incorporate this technology into the curriculum was an inevitable next step. The Medical Library’s Technology Team was inspired by how the University of New England used this program to innovate their medical curriculum (Dyer, Swartzlander & Gugliucci, 2018), and decided to investigate it further. We were able to get a demo version available at the medical library from June 01, 2019 through August 02, 2019. I worked with the librarian liaisons for the following IUSM departments to reach out to faculty and researchers on the Indianapolis campus who had an interest in teaching or researching these areas:

- Center for Aging Research
- Hospice and Palliative Medicine Fellowship
- Geriatric Medicine Fellowship
- Neurology, Center for Alzheimer Disease
- Psychiatry
- Medical Education
- Emergency Medicine
- Internal Medicine
- Ophthalmology
- Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery

In addition, I also reached out to the librarian liaisons to the health sciences departments at IUPUI. In collaboration with the Manager of Medical Library Technology, we were able to schedule a total of 7 faculty, staff, fellows, and students to try out the software, and received a total of 6 responses to an assessment survey sent. We were able to use their responses to demonstrate interest in using this software in the curriculum, which was then used to justify purchasing the software.

In September 2019, the Ruth Lilly Medical Library and the IUPUI University Library have a joint, one-year subscription to EmbodiedLabs VR. Immediately after this became official, a faculty member at the IUPUI School of Health and Human Sciences incorporated the software into her curriculum. Students in the class had to view the Beatriz Lab modules on Alzheimer Disease and write a blurb about their experiences in VR. It is my hope that the data gathered from this experience will help the medical library's Technology Team to justify including this software as part of the IUSM curriculum over the course of the year, especially as faculty and students have indicated an interest in learning more about having end-of-life conversations.

The program is available to anyone affiliated with the Indiana University School of Medicine (IUSM) at the Ruth Lilly Medical Library's Nexus Collaborative Learning Lab. IUSM students are also able to access the Nexus 24/7 via their Crimson Cards. All others affiliated with IUPUI may use the stations available at the Nexus during business hours or the Virtual and Augmented Reality Lab at the IUPUI University Library.

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