

## Introduction

The need for trained surgical technologists (STs) is not new as technical schools have not been able to produce enough students to meet demand for decades (Weindorfer & Larkin, 2005). According to the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of STs is projected to grow 7% over the next 18-20 years, faster than the average for all occupations (2021). Even though the demand for STs is high, local technical schools are not able to keep up. Due to the need for trained scrub personnel, a program was created to train experienced operating room nurses to scrub within their service lines.

## Objectives

- Define criteria to select nurses for the boot camp.
- Create classroom components to be covered over one week.
- Define expectations for three weeks of scrubbing with a preceptor.
- Celebrate completion of the boot camp.

## Methods

Eligibility criteria for boot camp:

- 1 year circulator experience in the service line of which procedures desired to scrub.
- Satisfactory evaluations from team members
- Recommendation from nurse supervisor



## Methods Continued

### Classroom Components

- Lecture covering the specific skill sets with objectives and expectations
- Demonstrations over different ways (if applicable) to perform each skill set. Examples of poor form, misconceptions, and sterile breaks will also be shown and explained how to trouble shoot.
- Simulation to practice the skill sets until satisfactory performance has been achieved.

### Skill sets taught:

- Performing sterile scrub
- Gowning and gloving
- Preparing a sterile field
- Passing instrumentation
- Instrumentation recall

### Preceptor Training Expectations

#### Week 1 (Scrubs 3-8 cases):

- Confidence with preparing a sterile field, gowning and gloving self and others and in passing mechanics.
- Preceptor teaches surgeon preferences, how to pull the cases, and procedural steps.
- Preceptor to pay attention to passing of sharps and sterile technique with remediation after more than 2 breaks in one day.

#### Week 2 (Scrubs 8-15 cases):

- Preparation of sterile field with no help on previously scrubbed procedures and minimal help with set-up on new procedures.
- Improved speed and response time on passing instruments.
- Increased anticipation of procedural steps for repeated procedures.
- Pull an entire case with little or no assistance.
- Break in sterile technique limited to less than three for the week, especially if previously identified.
- Passing sharps with more confidence and less correction.

#### Week 3 & 4 (Scrubs $\geq 20$ cases or 3 of same procedure)

- Preceptor utilized only for questions and guidance in new instrumentation, procedures, or if procedure deviates from standard steps.
- Pull cases with no assistance.
- Quickly identifies breaks in sterile technique and corrected with little to no coaching.
- Fluid passing of instrumentation and sharps with satisfactory speed and recall.
- Anticipation of procedural steps on at least half the procedure.

## Methods Continued

### Celebrate Boot Camp Graduation

- Each graduate is celebrated at a staff meeting and presented with a completion certificate.
- Each graduating class is honored at daily huddle and through departmental methods of communication.



## Conclusions

Four classes have successfully graduated with a total of 11 nurses. A variety of service lines have benefited the program including GYN, orthopedics, general surgery, vascular, transplant, and urology. Improvements for future state may include pre-assessment of potential nurses to determine readiness, 1:1 evaluations after the first week of class with the trainer and leader, and formal evaluations from preceptors.

## References

Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook, Surgical Technologists* at <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/surgical-technologists.htm> (visited July 31, 2021).

Weindorfer, E., Larkin, B. G., AORN Journal. *A Critical Shortage of Surgical Technologists Creates Collaboration Between Rivals.*

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