

CERTIFICATION FOR CENTRAL STERILE SUPPLY DEPARTMENT TECHNICIANS



Certification of Central Sterile Supply Department technicians ensures patient safety by helping prevent healthcare associated infections.



THE ISSUE

IAHCSMM's top legislative priority is to ensure that there are certified Central Sterile Supply Department technicians in every healthcare facility. IAHCSMM maintains every patient has the right to receive the highest quality of care during his or her visit to a healthcare facility.

Through certification, Central Sterile Supply Department technicians will be properly educated to assist in the challenge to reduce healthcare associated infections. Every patient deserves to have an educated, certified Central Sterile Supply Department technician responsible for reprocessing his or her instruments.

WHAT IS IAHCSMM?

IAHCSMM, the International Association of Healthcare Central Service Materiel Management, represents approximately 18,000 Central Sterile Supply Department professionals in the U.S. and abroad who facilitate the procurement, management and processing of surgical supplies and equipment. IAHCSMM is committed to promoting safety and preventing infections for patients by providing educational and professional development opportunities to Central Sterile Supply Department professionals.

WHO IS A CENTRAL STERILE SUPPLY DEPARTMENT TECHNICIAN?

Central Sterile Supply Department technicians are responsible for processing surgical supplies and equipment. Central Sterile Supply Department technicians provide support to patient care services in the healthcare facility. Their tasks include decontaminating, cleaning, processing, assembling, sterilizing, storing, and distributing the medical devices and supplies needed for patient care. They are trained in policies, principles, methods, national standards, and management of sterilization processes.

The Central Sterile Supply Department of a healthcare facility is the heart of all activity surrounding supplies and equipment required for operating rooms, Endoscopy suites, ICU, birth centers and other patient care areas. Central Sterile Supply Department technicians play a most important role in patient care arenas, and are responsible for first-line processes to prevent patient infections.

WHY CERTIFICATION?

The Central Sterile Supply profession continues to evolve at a rapid pace with new surgical items being introduced regularly. The processing of robotics, endoscopes, joint replacement, and related instruments and equipment requires an advanced technical knowledge that only certification will provide. Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation (AAMI) standards recommends certification for individuals responsible for sterilization activities, as well as those who manage Central Sterile Supply processes. Joint Commission Patient Safety goals require specific knowledge of the processing and monitoring of instrumentation and equipment to comply with their rigid quality control policies in order to prevent patient injury.

To comply with these requirements, Central Sterile Supply Department technicians must receive ongoing, formal training, including certification, in order to perform their daily duties safely, effectively and consistently. Certification will promote healthcare quality, reduce the risk of healthcare associated infections, and ensure successful patient care.

This is an issue of basic patient safety. Central Sterile Supply Department technicians can help prevent infections in patients. Our patients deserve the highest level of patient safety and care. Certification of Central Sterile Supply Department technicians will assist in achieving this goal.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates the direct costs associated with healthcare associated infections are as high as \$45 billion each year. http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/pdf/Scott_CostPaper.pdf
- In 2002, there were 1.7 million healthcare associated infections and 99,000 deaths. <http://www.hhs.gov/ash/initiatives/hai/index.html>
- Surgical site infections result in an estimated 290,485 infections per year, 13,088 deaths per year, cost a hospital \$25,546 per event per year, and cost a hospital \$7.4 million per year. <http://www.hhs.gov/ash/initiatives/hai/introduction.html>
- Beginning October 2012, Medicare payments to hospitals will be tied to protecting patients from infections.