

HSPA represents over 48,000 Central Service technicians across the U.S. and abroad. Today's surgical instruments are highly complex and ever-changing; they involve many tiny channels and crevices that can hide debris. Central Service technicians perform their jobs with only a high school diploma or GED, and yet they are required to know 37,000 different surgical instruments. **Oversight of this profession would be through normal process of Joint Commission review - no change, minimal effort by hospitals/ambulatory surgery centers and no effort by Dept of Health.**

The following states have laws requiring the certification of these technicians: Connecticut (2015), Delaware (2022), New Jersey, New York (2013), Pennsylvania (2020), and Tennessee (2017).

### Who are Central Service Technicians?

- Central Service technicians (CS techs) are responsible for ensuring that equipment and instruments used during surgical procedures are properly disassembled, cleaned, inspected, sterilized, and reassembled prior to patient use.
- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, for 2022, there are 1,360 CS techs in Minnesota.<sup>1</sup>

### What is the Process to Become a Certified Central Service Technician?

- Formal educational programs are not required; however, there are many programs available.
  - Purdue University online - <https://www.distance.purdue.edu/training/cssp/>
  - Self-study through IAHCSPM or Certification Board for Sterile Processing and Distribution (CBSPD)
  - Community Colleges – Minneapolis Community and Technical College, Anoka-Ramsey Community College
- There are four different certification exams and only one would be required in the legislation.
  - Certified Registered Central Service Technician (CRCST) exam = \$140
  - Certified Endoscope Reprocessor Credential exam = \$140
  - Certified Flexible Endoscope Reprocessor exam = \$128
  - Central Supply Processing Department Technician (CSPDT) exam = \$128

### Why Regulate Now?

- CS techs perform tasks that are integral to patient safety, yet their profession is unregulated. A person could be hired off the street to sterilize surgical instruments and then those instruments are used on patients.
- They are required to know 37,000 different surgical instruments and each instrument has an instruction for use.
  - For example, a colonoscope has 110 steps that must be followed to be sterilized properly. A hospital that has 15 operating rooms averages 13,000 cases per year. This translates into 1.2 million surgical instruments being disassembled, cleaned, inspected, sterilized, and reassembled prior to patient use.
- Minnesota has several health issue related outbreaks caused by dirty surgical instruments because of improper cleaning:
  - University of Minnesota medical center notified 100 patients due to unsterile surgical instruments.<sup>2</sup>
  - Abbott Northwestern notified patients from four surgeries that unsterile surgical instruments were used.<sup>3</sup>
- The ACA established the Hospital-Acquired Condition (HAC) Reduction Program to provide an incentive for hospitals to reduce HACs. If hospitals fall into the top 25% of HACs for the previous year, then hospitals will face an additional 1% reduction in Medicare reimbursement payments.<sup>3</sup>
- The Joint Commission reports that 36% of accredited hospitals surveyed in 2011 were noncompliant with its standards to reduce the risk of infection associated with medical equipment, devices and supplies.<sup>4</sup>

### What is Being Proposed?

- CS techs must pass a nationally accredited exam and complete 10 continuing education credits.
- CS techs employed prior to or on December 31, 2027 do not have to be certified.
  - For those not grandfathered, they will have 18 months from the date of hire to get certified.
  - Grandfathered CS techs required to complete 10 credits of continuing education annually.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_mn.htm](https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_mn.htm); referenced as "medical equipment preparers"

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.maddixlaw.com/single-post/2014/11/27/unsterilized-instruments-used-at-minneapolis-hospitals>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.healthcarefacilitiestoday.com/posts/Minneapolis-hospital-reportedly-used-unsterilized-equipment--6816>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-Fee-for-Service-Payment/AcuteInpatientPPS/HAC-Reduction-Program.html>

<sup>4</sup> Pyrek, Kelly. Improper Reprocessing Targeted As One of Healthcare's Most Dangerous Hazards. *Infection Control Today*; Vol. 17, No. 5, May 2013.