

OR NURSING ROLE – SURGICAL ASSISTANCE

Policy purpose:

To define the role of the scrub nurse with respect to assisting the surgeon at surgery

Policy Statement

The primary role of the nurse scrubbed during surgical procedures is defined by ORNAC standards (see appendix)

Policy Scope

This policy applies to all physicians, residents, fellows, nurses and students working in PHC facilities

Procedure

If the situation warrants, OR scrub nurses are available to provide some rudimentary assistance in the operating room such as sponging or suctioning, cutting sutures at the surgeon's direction or holding retractors for short intervals of time (limited to a few minutes). They should not be in the role of a surgical assistant where an assistant would usually be required (such as larger, more complex procedures). They are not to assist by dissecting tissue, placing sutures or holding scopes. This policy relies on a common sense approach to the role of the nurse in the operating room.

Nursing staff are requested to bring concerns regarding this policy to the Patient Care Manager through the CNL for resolution by the Physician Program Director, Surgical Program.

Appendices

College of Registered Nurses of British Columbia (CRNBC), Feb 2017. *Scope of Practice for Registered Nurses; Standards, Limits, Conditions*. Copyright CRNBC Feb. 28, 2017. Pub. No. 433 pp: 39, 41.

Operating Room Nurses Association of Canada (ORNAC), 2015. *The ORNAC Standards for Perioperative Registered Nurse Practice*, 12th ed., October 2015, pp: 43.