

Racing to 100%: A Certification Initiative for Surgical Technicians.

Marlene Leidy BSN, RN, CNOR
Lehigh Valley Health Network, Marlene_H.Leidy@lvhn.org

Hope Johnson BSN, RN, CNOR
Lehigh Valley Health Network, Hope_L.Johnson@lvhn.org

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarlyworks.lvhn.org/patient-care-services-nursing>



Part of the [Nursing Commons](#)

Published In/Presented At

Leidy, M. (2011, October). *Racing to 100%: A Certification Initiative for Surgical Technicians*. Poster Presented at: The Nursing Management Congress, Las Vegas, NV.

Johnson, H. (2011, September). *Racing to 100%: A Certification Initiative for Surgical Technicians*. Poster Presented at; Managing Today's OR Suite Conference, Chicago, IL.

[Research Day 2012: Transforming Culture Through Evidence-Based Practice](#), October 29, 2012, Lehigh Valley Health Network, Allentown, PA.

Racing to 100%: A Certification Initiative for Surgical Technicians

Perioperative Services

Lehigh Valley Health Network, Allentown, Pennsylvania



Problem Statement:

For unlicensed staff, certification is not traditionally a focal point. A stance was taken towards mandatory surgical technician certification at Lehigh Valley Health Network. A plan for engaging and supporting staff was needed to accomplish this goal.

Rationale:

Certification, as defined by the American Board of Nursing Specialties (ABNS), is the formal recognition of the specialized knowledge, skills, and experience demonstrated by the achievement of standards identified by a nursing specialty to promote optimal health outcomes. Additionally, according to the Association of Surgical Technologists, "The expertise these highly-trained professionals (Certified Surgical Technologists) bring to the OR contributes directly to risk reduction, cost curtailment and quality assurance." As healthcare managers and educators, professional development of all staff is a constant focus that should be supported and encouraged.

Methodology:

The unit educators were paramount to the success of this process. A timeline for certification was developed. Key Surgical Technician champions also came forward, expressing an interest in helping with the initiative. Differing certifying bodies were investigated and an informational handout was developed for all Surgical Technicians. One certifying body allowed for the hospital to become a testing site. External proctors were found and the majority of the Surgical Technicians were able to take the test and become certified on the hospital's campus. New hires were given 12 months from the date of hire to obtain certification. Human Resources did a market rate adjustment for all surgical technician based on the account of their certification.

Results:

Within 12 months of the initial rollout of the certification initiative, 100% of the surgical technicians at all 3 hospital campuses were certified. This total encompassed over 30 people. In addition, certification has been maintained and we have retained our testing center status. Failure to maintain certification did result in termination occurring for one staff person. Continued support from all 3 leadership teams occurs for these staff members.



Take Home Messages:

- Engage the staff
- Do the research
- Provide easy avenues for testing
- Support, support, support
- Stick to your bottom line

Behavioral Objectives:

1. Identify talking points for certification
2. Develop a plan for certifying staff
3. Create a strategy for sustaining certification

