

## Frequently Asked Questions Operating Room Assistant Role

### **What is the role of an Operating Room Assistant? Is the introduction of this role replacing nursing positions?**

The role of the ORA is a supportive, additional resource that is being added to specific Operating and Procedural areas across Manitoba.

As an integrated member of the surgical team, the ORA will provide support and assistance working with nurses, surgeons and perioperative team members to improve efficiencies in the theatres.

The ORA **will not** be replacing nursing positions.

### **Will the ORAs perform nursing activities or functions?**

No. ORAs will not replace nursing functions. The role is designed to support nurses by allowing nursing staff to practice to full scope.

Some functions currently performed by nurses could be assigned to the ORA, including: obtaining case cart for the theatre, initial setup of the sterile field, transporting a patient from preop area to the operating room, assisting with patient positioning, instrumentation handling, disassembling of the sterile field, etc. However, the functions that must be completed by nurses will continue to be completed by nurses.

For example, a two (2) nurse check will remain a two (2) nurse check.

### **Will the ORAs perform reserved acts?**

No. There is no plan or intention for ORAs to perform reserved acts included in this initiative.

For example, ORAs **will not** prepare or administer medications or place instrumentation below the dermis.

### **Are ORAs able to perform assigned tasks?**

Yes. ORAs may perform tasks assigned to them by regulated health care professionals.

An example is, ORAs will receive specialized training related to surgical instrumentation intended to prepare them for success if they are assigned the task of instrumentation handling.

### **Who is responsible for the performance of an individual ORA?**

Similar to other health care providers and professionals, performance management of an individual ORA will be the responsibility of the ORA's manager.

With respect to appropriate handling of sterile implementation, the physician support that function will hold oversight responsibility.

With the interdisciplinary team environment, all team members have the responsibility to flag concerns or issues in a timely fashion, particularly if patient care could be compromised through established processes.

### **Who is legally responsible for the ORA and their actions?**

In the perioperative environment, the responsibility lies with all members to maintain a safe environment for patients.

Under the supervision of the Clinical Manager, the ORA will work in collaboration with the regulated healthcare team to facilitate the safe and effective conduct of invasive and non-invasive surgical procedures.

The team will remain responsible to ensure that operating and procedural environments are safe, equipment is functioning properly, supplies are available, and that the procedure is conducted under conditions that maximize patient safety.

### **Who will provide break relief for the ORA? Will the ORA provide break relief for the RN/LPN?**

The RN and/or LPN could provide break relief for the ORA. Or, if a second ORA is scheduled as part of the team, they could provide break relief for the ORA.

ORAs will not provide break relief for RN or LPN members of the team. RN and LPN break relief continue to be provided by an RN or LPN (where applicable), in accordance with current practices.

### **Who should I direct additional questions or suggestions to?**

Questions and additional feedback are welcomed and can be shared directly with your manager. Please share your ideas or suggestions as to how the ORA role can best be utilized to improve workflow in your area.