

November 10, 2021

## NYSSPA Statement on PAs Serving as Surgical Technicians

PAs continue to play an essential role in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic pivoting into the roles where they are needed to most; however, NYSSPA asserts that PAs should not serve as surgical technicians.

As essential members of the surgical team, PAs understand the vital role of surgical technicians but are not appropriate replacements for this separate and important profession. The removal of practice barriers through Executive Order 202 and subsequent Executive Order 4 allow PAs to practice to the extent of their education training and knowledge rather than restricted by barriers including burdensome supervision. Surgical technician training is separate from and outside of the education, training, and experience of the majority of PAs. Surgical technicians undergo specific education and training within an accredited program and complete national certification. PAs, institutions, and other members of the healthcare team are exposed to excessive liability when practicing outside of their education, training, and experience.

Section 6542 of New York Education Law clearly states:

“Nothing in this article, or in article thirty-seven of the public health law, shall be construed to authorize physician assistants to perform those specific functions and duties specifically delegated by law to those persons licensed as allied health professionals under the public health law or this chapter.”

Section 2824 of Public Health Law provides standards for function as a surgical technologist:

“Minimum standards for certification of surgical technologists. A person may not function as a surgical technologist in a healthcare facility, and a healthcare facility shall not employ or otherwise contract for the services of a surgical technologist, unless the person meets one of the following:

- (a) has successfully completed a nationally accredited educational program for surgical technologists and holds and maintains a certified surgical technologist credential administered by a nationally accredited surgical technologist credentialing organization;
- (b) has completed an appropriate training program for surgical technology in the United States Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard or Public Health Service

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(c) provides evidence that the person was employed as a surgical technologist in a healthcare facility for a cumulative period of one year, occurring within the four years immediately prior to the effective date of this section. In furtherance of this paragraph, any employer of persons performing surgical technology on the effective date of this section shall confirm in writing to each employee his or her employment in a capacity performing surgical technology in a healthcare facility as of the effective date of this section; or

(d) is in the service of the federal government, to the extent the person is performing duties related to that service.”

PAs are committed to the healthcare team and value the role of surgical technicians. As we continue to respond to the public health crisis, PAs, institutions, and healthcare teams must ensure PA practice occurs within our scope of practice as determined by education, training, and knowledge.