

January 2020

HEALTHCARE HIGHLIGHTS

The Rural AHEC Student Newsletter



January's Healthcare Career Focus:

Sterile Processing Technician

Sterile Processing Technicians are responsible for cleaning and sterilizing surgical equipment and instruments. They often lay out surgical gloves and gowns before surgical procedures as well as take charge of inventory control of all sterile items used in the operating room. They must learn the best methods of cleaning and storing those items using principles of microbiology and disease control.

What might I do as a Sterile Processing Tech?

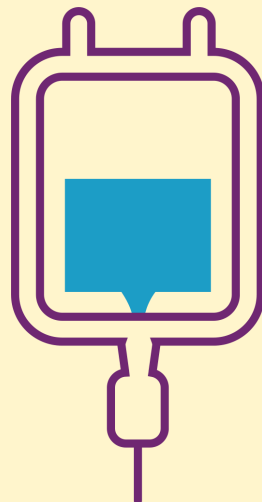
Work behind the scenes in a hospital or clinic to support operating room procedures

Keep patients and medical staff safe by reading and following detailed instructions and protocol regarding how to wash, sterilize, cool, assemble, package, store, label, and deliver instruments and equipment before and/or after surgical procedures

Take apart every part of surgical instruments to be cleaned and sanitized, then reassemble correctly

Take inventory of gloves, masks, and other items such as sutures

Adapt to an environment that is innovative and constantly changing



How do I become a Sterile Processing Technician (SPT)?

- Complete a STP training program at a community college or technical school
- Many complete a clinical internship to gain practical experience
- Pass the certification exam to become a Certified Sterile Processing Technician
- You may be able to substitute on the job training for formal training in order to take the exam

Average Salary:
\$36,240—\$52,650

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics
and ZipRecruiter

What is it really like to be a Sterile Processing Technician?

There is a growing need for SPT's, especially in the Rochester area (43 SPT jobs are currently available in Rochester on the Indeed website). If you are a detail-oriented, mindful person who is interested in a constantly evolving career in which professional development is encouraged, then you will want to research a sterile processing technician certification program. Many employers in NY will want a certified SPT who has had hands-on experience, so keep that in mind when you are looking at educational options.



STPs protect patients and medical staff from contamination and infection by doing their jobs thoroughly and conscientiously. They often wear protective gear like gowns and masks. Typically, STPs can be on one of three eight-hour shifts —day, evening, or night shift. They are a very important part of a medical team!

Meet some Sterile Processing Technicians in the following videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k7XjDqdfQ7M> & <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jCqA6TVSqFY>

Also: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xmy1lmwUtOw>



“We are the heart of the hospital...”

Shirley Raque, CRCST

“... frontline SPD technicians are an indispensable human resource to SPD leaders, instrument manufacturers, and others...”

“Who more than hands-on SPD technicians experience the exciting “high” that comes with having to quickly process a “loaner” or “turnover” surgical instrument tray for an impending surgery, yet not compromising quality in the process?”

Francis Kyle, CRCST

Western New York Rural Area Health Education Center

20 Duncan Street, Warsaw, New York 14569

585-786-6275

lgreen@r-ahec.org

www.r-ahec.org

Please contact us if you have questions about healthcare career opportunities or educational pathways to healthcare careers!

Western New York Rural Area Health Education Center (R-AHEC) is one of nine centers in the New York State Area Health Education Center (NYS AHEC) organization. Our mission is to improve health and healthcare through education.

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