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Position Statement on CST and CSFA Completing BLS/CPR Training

Certified Surgical Technologists (CST) and Certified Surgical First Assistants (CSFA) are individuals who complete education and training to function as members of the surgical team under the broad delegatory authority of the physician, as defined by the American College of Surgeons, the provisions for which vary from state to state and according to state law and health care facility policy. As part of the educational and training process, the CST and CSFA are required to complete a Healthcare Provider Basic Life Support (BLS) Course that includes cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), use of an automated external defibrillator (AED), and treating a choking victim as outlined in the *Core Curriculum for Surgical Technology* and *Core Curriculum for Surgical Assisting*.

AST supports that CSTs and CSFAs should complete a BLS course and maintain the knowledge. When a patient 'codes' in the operating room, the primary duty of the CST in the scrub role is to preserve the sterile field. However, as previously mentioned, CSTs and CSFAs function under the delegatory authority of the physician; if the physician needs the assistance of the CST in treating the patient, the CST must fulfill his/her responsibility to the patient and the sterile team in assisting to preserve the patient's life. Additionally, the public has the reasonable right to assume that the CST and CSFA have the knowledge and skills to provide life-saving support to an individual or individuals experiencing an out-of-department or an out-of-hospital emergency situation.

Therefore, it is the position of AST that CSTs and CSFAs, as health care providers of direct patient care employed in a variety of health care settings, eg hospitals, outpatient surgery centers, physician office, physician group practice, should maintain their Healthcare Provider BLS knowledge and skills as evidence to the public, peers and other health care providers they are prepared to provide the necessary emergency support to a patient in the operating room or any other type of health care setting as well as out-of-hospital emergency support.