



House Bill 1006 Hospitals and Ambulatory Surgical Facilities- Surgical Technologist

Position: **Oppose**

3/3/2024

House Health and Government Operations Committee

I am Tina DiMarino, President and CEO of Custom Surgical Consultants, LLC (CSC), a Maryland based ambulatory surgery center (ASC) consultant company that manages and develops several ASCs in Maryland and across the country. Our company works with Medicare certified and fully accredited ASCs performing tens of thousands of cases on an annual basis. I am writing as this bill would significantly affect Maryland facilities as we currently oversee centers employing roughly 75 surgical technologists; of which only 3 have their certification.

Custom Surgical Consultants strongly opposes House Bill 1006, which prohibits ambulatory surgical centers from hiring a surgical technologist who have not completed a specified program. This would increase the shortage of qualified candidates in our healthcare system and effectively disrupt patient outcomes in surgery centers, statewide.

Surgical technologists, also called scrub techs, are healthcare professionals whose primary duties are preparing the operating rooms, keeping the environment sterile and well organized, and working closely with the surgical team. They are an invaluable part of the active operating room staff and handle everything from preparing the sterile field to anticipating the surgeon's needs and advocating for patient safety.

Custom Surgical Consultants, in concert with facility leadership, provide a framework for an onsite orientation training program that each surgical tech must complete to ensure that the standards of care in surgery are met. Many scrub techs come to surgery centers with a wide range of outside experience, either learning from the military, transferring from one of our clinical offices performing as technicians, or they bring with them previous job experience with other surgery centers or hospitals with multiple specialties. Prospective surgical technicians currently have many different avenues available to them to enter the medical field, and this bill would limit those who are interested in entering the medical field.

Patient safety and infection control are high priorities to all the organizations we assist. CSC management facility outcomes have low infection rates and meet the highest standards of care. Our centers follow the highest quality control standards set forth by AORN and AAMI guidelines. Our surgical techs and the entire surgical teams following the set protocols, orientation program and standards of care, have allowed us to achieve surgical site infection rates lower than the national average.

Surgical technicians are educated on location and include having a 1:1 mentor until they have reached specific milestones and are ready to scrub independently. Many of our surgical techs have used the experience they have gained at the facilities we oversee and go on to nursing school, medical school, or higher-level jobs within the industry.

Ambulatory surgical centers are experiencing extreme difficulties in hiring qualified surgical technicians. In a center we manage in Pennsylvania, where there is already a mandated certification requirement, we have found it extremely difficult to fill vacant surgical tech positions. We have consistently placed ads for certified surgical technicians without viable candidates or fulfillment of the vacancy.

Requiring surgical technologists to be certified will not only cause hardships to the surgical teams experiencing staffing shortages, but it will also further limit many opportunities for individuals hoping to enter the surgical tech workforce. For these reasons, Custom Surgical Consultants, LLC is asking for an unfavorable report on House Bill 1006.

For consideration,

*Tina J DiMarino*

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