



Theatre Nurses

A key member of our Surgical teams

The Theatre Nurses play a vital role in ensuring that each and every surgical procedure runs as smoothly and efficiently as possible. At the beginning of the shift, the Theatre Nurse is allocated a surgical procedure, with a key responsibility to ensure the theatre is prepared and laid out correctly. What this entails:

- Damp dusting (at the beginning of the day)
- Ensuring correct selection and preparation of instrumentation
- Placing equipment in the correct positions for that particular procedure
- Preparing anaesthetic monitoring equipment, intravenous fluids and surgical scrub

Once theatre is prepared

The Theatre Nurse is then responsible for organising any equipment that will be required in the induction area (this is where patients are anaesthetised). The Veterinary Surgeon will anaesthetise the patient, with the Theatre Nurse connecting the patient to the appropriate monitoring equipment, and then monitoring and recording vital signs at regular intervals.

Getting the patient ready for surgery

Preparing the patient for surgery is another important part of the Theatre Nurse's role, and may include radiography of the specific area which is to be operated on. The nurse will then clip, clean and prepare the area, and ensure the patient is transported through to theatre and

positioned correctly.

During surgery: the Theatre Nurse's other key roles include:

- opening surgical equipment aseptically for the scrubbed surgeon
- monitoring of anaesthesia throughout procedure
- regular recording of patient's vital signs
- administering pain relief and antibiotics during the procedure (when necessary, as directed by the Veterinary Surgeon)

Towards the end of surgery

At this point, the Theatre Nurse collects all necessary information from the surgeon to do with post-operative care, plus medications needed, and makes sure that a note is made of these on the hospitalisation sheet. The patient is taken back to the ward, where the Theatre Nurse hands the case over to the Ward Nurse, who'll continue to monitor the patient from this point.

The importance of cleanliness and hygiene

As you would expect, it's important to maintain a clean environment in theatre at all times. This is another key part of the Theatre Nurse's role and includes tasks like cleaning and packing of surgical equipment and instrumentation (which, in turn, help the job of the sterile services team).