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Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Sterilgutversorgung
Société Suisse de Stérilisation Hospitalière
Società Svizzera di Sterilizzazione Ospedaliera



Improvements to sterile processing - an essential part of any global surgery initiative

Christina Fast, CRCST

Founder and Executive Director,

Sterile Processing Education Charitable Trust (SPECT)

Introduction

- Disparities in surgical care are a significant contributor to global health inequities.
- Studies conducted in low-income economies indicate surgical site infections range from 10.9% to 70%.
- Studies link infections to improperly sterilized instruments.



Introduction

- Sterile processing plays an essential role in the success of any global safe surgery initiative, yet it is often overlooked.
- SPECT developed a comprehensive training program to support continuous improvements in sterile processing practices.



- Aggregate data was compiled between 2011-2021, using a quality improvement design⁽¹⁻⁵⁾.
- A retrospective approach to data analysis was taken to summarize findings from assessments across **14 countries** in **Sub-Saharan Africa, South East Asia, and Central America**.

Analysis identified:

- a common lack of knowledge related to sterile processing,
- need for access to equipment and resources,
- absence of national guidelines,
- no standard operating procedures for workers to reference, and
- no policies in place to protect workers.



Results

Continuous education, training, and mentoring, as well as advocacy, demonstrated visible improvements.



Results



Results



Areas where support and improvement is needed:

- Training and education
- Supplies and equipment
- Maintenance
- Data collection

Collaboration with larger global initiatives (such as Safe Surgery 2020⁶), Ministries of Health, and local surgical teams increases the likelihood of sustaining improvements.



Conclusion

- Common barriers related to sterile processing practices exist in resource constrained countries globally.
- Some of these challenges can be addressed with education and training.
- Increased attention to international standards as well as supporting local health care workers and administrators with **adequate resources** must occur to see continued improvements.



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Thank you!

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