

Introduction to Perioperative Theatre

Introduction to Perioperative Theatre Administrative Services

(Designed as quick-reference notes for students, new staff, or anyone needing a concise overview)

1. What Are Perioperative Theatre Administrative Services?

Aspect	Description
Scope	All non-clinical activities that support the safe, efficient, and cost-effective running of an operating theatre (OT) from patient arrival to discharge from the post-anaesthetic care unit (PACU).
Key Objectives	- Optimize theatre utilisation - Ensure patient safety & regulatory compliance - Coordinate staff, equipment, and supplies - Manage information flow and documentation
Typical Departments	- Theatre Scheduling/Planning - Patient Admission & Pre-operative Assessment - Sterile Processing & Instrument Management - Materials & Stock Control - Finance & Billing - Quality & Risk Management

2. Core Functions & Responsibilities

2.1. Scheduling & Planning

- Case Booking
 - Receive surgical requests (elective & emergency).
 - Prioritise based on urgency, clinical need, and resource availability.
- Timetabling
 - Allocate operating rooms (ORs) and time slots.
 - Balance surgeon, anaesthetist, and nursing rosters.
- Capacity Management

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- Monitor daily/weekly utilisation rates.
- Adjust schedules for cancellations, overruns, or equipment failures.

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2.2. Patient Flow Management

- **Preoperative Registration**

- Verify patient identity, consent, and preassessment completion.
- Capture required clinical data (allergies, comorbidities, blood group).

- **Transport Coordination**

- Arrange movement from ward/preop bay to theatre and back to recovery.

- **Discharge Planning**

- Ensure postop instructions, medication reconciliation, and follow-up appointments are documented.

2.3. Resource & Equipment Management

- **Instrument & Device Tracking**

- Maintain inventory of reusable instruments, disposables, and implantable devices.
- Use barcode/RFID systems for real-time status (clean, sterilised, in-use, maintenance).

- **Equipment Maintenance**

- Schedule preventive maintenance and calibration of anaesthetic machines, monitors, lasers, etc.
- Log faults and coordinate repairs to minimise downtime.

- **Supply Chain**

- Forecast consumable needs (sutures, drapes, meds) using usage data.
- Liaise with central stores and vendors for timely re-stock.

2.4. Staffing & Human Resources

- **Roster Development**

- Create shift patterns for surgeons, anaesthetists, nurses, technicians, and support staff.

- **Credentialing & Training**

- Verify licences, vaccinations, and competency records.
- Organise mandatory training (e.g., fire safety, infection control).

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- **Performance Monitoring**

- Track attendance, waiting times, and staff satisfaction metrics.

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2.5. Documentation & Information Systems

- **Electronic Health Records (EHR) Integration**

- Enter operative notes, anaesthetic records, and postoperative orders.

- **Theatre Management Software**

- Real-time dashboards for case status, turnover times, and alerts.

- **Regulatory Reporting**

- Compile data for national audits (e.g., NCEPOD, WHO Surgical Safety Checklist compliance).

2.6. Financial & Billing Functions

- **Cost Tracking**

- Allocate direct costs (implants, drugs) and indirect costs (room time, staffing) per case.

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