

INVENTORY TIPS FOR SPD LEADERS



INVENTORY MANAGEMENT EXPERT

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Beyond Clean Inventory Management Expert™:

Inventory Tips for SPD Leaders

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Setting the tone early can help achieve inventory management success in your Sterile Processing Department (SPD). One way to achieve that is to provide education and in-service training for staff that emphasizes the importance of everyone's input in maintaining a useful inventory.

Managers should maintain responsibility for overseeing orders and budget reconciliation. However, conducting physical inventory, entering inventory orders and restocking items can be delegated to staff.

There are several key things for SPD leaders to know about inventory management:

- Managing inventory is complex and expensive.
- There are two distinct categories to be managed — operational supplies and patient care supplies.
- Since surgical sets cost thousands of dollars, it is critical to avoid overstock that sits on shelves unused and to ensure that there are adequate trays to meet surgical demand, without immediate need for steam sterilization.

Good inventory management entails collecting utilization data at both tray and instrument levels. Tray usage data identifies which trays are over or understocked, while instrument-level data gauges whether trays have excess instrumentation. It's also important to educate staff on the inventory process.

If you're having storage issues, look at what you're storing. How much space is occupied by supplies that can be classified as slow-moving inventory? To maximize the value of your storage, minimize space used for the inventory you rarely use and maximize space for what you frequently use.

SPD leaders should have the following inventory management strengths:

- Leadership and management
- Verbal and written communication
- Organizational and logistics skills
- Strong attention to detail

What can an SPD leader do today to improve inventory management? Assign SPD staff on each shift as an inventory resource — especially for backup instrument inventory, which may help reduce incomplete trays going to the OR.

Have more questions? Contact Debra at: debra.burns@aesculapusa.com

Beyond Clean Inventory Management Expert™ Biography:

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Debra has 39 years of experience working in the Sterile Processing field, with 16 years in SPD consulting and 20 years in management. Debra maintains certifications such as CRCST, CIS, and CHL and is a certified instructor through HSPA. She also maintains certification as a Lean Black Belt Professional (LBBP). Her consulting experience includes interim management, process improvement, HSPA certification course instruction, new construction logistics, SPD assessments and asset management relating to instrument tracking systems.

Debra has managed four healthcare system SPDs, ranging from a multi-facility healthcare system in Saudi Arabia to a teaching medical center in the United States. Debra has served as President of the Nebraskaland Central Service Association. She was a member of the ASHCSP Education Committee.

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