



**Australian Government**

**HLTTHE008 Provide assistance during  
clinical emergencies in surgical theatre  
environments**

# HLTTHE008 Provide assistance during clinical emergencies in surgical theatre environments

## Modification History

Release	Comments
1	This unit of competency was first released in HLT Health Release 11.0.

## Application

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to provide advanced technical support during intra-operative clinical emergencies. It applies to experienced operating theatre technicians who respond to emergency situations in coordination with surgical team or according to clinician instructions, while working within established protocols and defined scope of responsibility.

Work is undertaken in accordance with infection prevention and control, safety procedures, clinical emergency procedures, and within the scope of responsibility of the operating theatre technician.

*The skills in this unit must be applied in accordance with current Commonwealth and State/Territory legislation, Australian/New Zealand standards and industry codes of practice.*

## Licensing/Regulatory Information

No licensing, legislative or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of publication.

## Pre-requisite unit(s)

HLTAID009 Provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation

## Competency field(s)

Theatre Equipment

## Unit sector(s)

Health

## Elements and Performance Criteria

Elements	Performance Criteria
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<i>Elements describe the essential outcomes.</i>	<i>Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.</i>
1. Respond to intra-operative clinical emergencies	1.1 Use personal protective equipment according to infection prevention and safety procedures 1.2 Notify surgical team of emergency conditions according to time constraints and organisational procedures 1.3 Undertake emergency repositioning of healthcare recipient in coordination with the surgical team 1.4 Follow clinician instructions, respond and carry out delegated emergency tasks 1.5 Respond to critical incident and code by performing allocated tasks according to emergency protocols
2. Provide support during emergency interventions	2.1 Obtain and prepare emergency equipment and use according to organisational procedure 2.2 Set up emergency support devices according to scope of job role 2.3 Adjust healthcare recipient position during emergency intervention to maintain procedural access according to instructions from surgical team 2.4 Provide manual support during emergency interventions according to instructions from surgical team
3. Support circulation and resuscitation responses	3.1 Prepare and position fluid support equipment during emergency procedures according to instructions from surgical team 3.2 Retrieve and transport medical supplies during emergency according to instructions from surgical team 3.3 Provide support during resuscitation efforts according to scope of job role and instructions from surgical team
4. Operate and maintain emergency-related theatre equipment	4.1 Set up emergency-related theatre equipment according to scope of job role, manufacturer and organisational procedures 4.2 Check and maintain equipment readiness through functional testing before and during emergency procedures according to organisational procedures 4.3 Interpret equipment alerts and failures and escalate according to organisational escalation procedures

## Foundation skills

*The foundation skills essential to performance of this unit, but not explicit in the performance criteria are listed here, along with a brief context statement.*

<b>Skill</b>	<b>Description</b>
Learning skills to:	Adapt technical knowledge of emergency procedures, role boundaries and safety requirements to respond to rapidly changing intra-operative emergency in a high-pressure context.
Reading skills to:	Interpret emergency procedures, workplace instructions and supply information to support timely response during clinical emergency.
Oral communication skills to:	Communicate to confirm receipt of instructions, escalate issues and provide status updates during emergency situation.
Numeracy skills to:	Interpret and compare numerical information, including equipment readings and indicators, against safe operating ranges and clinical limits to monitor equipment performance.

*Digital literacy outcomes are included in the Foundation Skills Companion Volume.*

## Range of conditions

N/A

# Assessment Requirements for HLTTHE008 Provide assistance during clinical emergencies in surgical theatre environments

## Performance Evidence

The candidate must demonstrate the ability to complete tasks outlined in elements and performance criteria of this unit, manage tasks and manage contingencies in the context of the job role. There must be evidence that the candidate has:

- responded to at least 2 intra-operative clinical emergencies, each involving different emergency scenarios and equipment requirements
- supported intra-operative emergency interventions across at least 1 occasion, demonstrating coordination with surgical team and application of emergency protocols
- supported resuscitation procedures across at least 2 occasions in a clinical or simulated environment
- operated and prepared at least 3 emergency-related operating theatre equipment items, including:
  - respiratory support
  - circulatory support
  - surgical visualisation
  - while completing the above, there is evidence that the candidate has:
    - verified equipment operational status through functional checks
    - confirmed equipment condition meets infection prevention requirements
    - positioned and connected equipment according to manufacturer specifications and organisational procedures

## Knowledge Evidence

The candidate must be able to demonstrate essential knowledge required to effectively complete tasks outlined in elements and performance criteria of this unit, manage tasks and respond to contingencies in the context of the job role. This includes knowledge of:

- types and classifications of intra-operative clinical emergencies, including:
  - cardiac arrest
  - respiratory failure
  - haemorrhage
  - anaphylaxis
  - can't intubate, can't oxygenate events
- operating theatre emergency protocols and escalation procedures, including:

- Code Blue
- Code Red
- medical emergency team calls
- response processes
- functions and safe use of emergency-related theatre equipment and machines, including:
  - defibrillators, oxygen and suction systems
  - difficult intubation trolleys, CMAC, bronchoscopes
  - rapid infusers, fluid warmers, blood warmers
  - gastroscopy and EBUS units, Cell Saver
- principles of infection prevention and control relevant to emergency procedures, including:
  - standard and transmission-based precautions
  - PPE usage in high-risk and time-critical settings
- roles and responsibilities of operating theatre technicians in emergency response, including:
  - scope of job role
  - delegation protocols from clinical staff
  - limits of authority during high-risk interventions
- safe patient positioning techniques to facilitate airway access, circulation, and surgical exposure, including:
  - lateral
  - supine
  - prone
  - lithotomy
  - Trendelenburg positions
- processes and documentation requirements following intra-operative emergencies, including:
  - incident reports
  - emergency logs
  - equipment checklists
  - WHS and infection control reporting
- basic concepts of emergency fluid products handling, including:
  - handling, transporting, and verifying fluid products
  - risks and infection control considerations

- maintenance and troubleshooting techniques for emergency support equipment, including:
  - routine checks and fault identification
  - basic error interpretation and escalation processes
- legal and ethical requirements during theatre emergencies, including:
  - duty of care and informed consent limitations
  - confidentiality and documentation standards
  - working under direction while upholding professional responsibilities

## Assessment Conditions

Skills must be demonstrated in the workplace or in a simulated environment that reflects workplace conditions.

The following conditions must be met for this unit:

- use of suitable facilities, equipment and resources, including access to:
  - emergency and resuscitation equipment, including:
    - mobile suction apparatus
    - oxygen systems
    - defibrillators
  - operating theatre equipment, including:
    - operating table and lights
    - electrosurgical unit
    - instrument trolley
    - suction apparatus including wall-mounted systems
    - microscopes
    - laparoscopic stack systems
  - positioning and mobility equipment, including:
    - bean bags
    - yellowfin stirrups
    - pat slides, slide sheets, hovermats
    - lateral supports
    - head supports and head foams
    - gel supports
    - traction or orthopaedic extension frames
    - tourniquet

- lightweight table extensions
  - hospital beds
  - workplace forms, digital tools, and storage systems for equipment and records
- modelling of industry operating conditions, including presence of situations requiring problem solving

Assessors must satisfy the current Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)/AQF mandatory competency requirements for assessors.

## Mandatory Workplace Requirements

Assessment of performance evidence may be in a workplace setting or an environment that accurately represents a real workplace.

## Unit Mapping Information

Previous Code and Title	Equivalence	Comments
	Newly created	This unit has been created to address a skill or task required by industry that is not covered by an existing unit of competency

## Links

Companion volumes, including implementation guides, are found on the national training register - <https://training.gov.au/training/details/HLT>.