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#### **AGENDA FOR CHANGE**

**NHS JOB EVALUATION SCHEME**

#### **JOB DESCRIPTION TEMPLATE**

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| JOB IDENTIFICATION |
| **Job Title:** Surgical First Assistant  **Reports to:** Theatre Coordinator    **Department:** Operating Theatres  **Job Code:** BN-N-365 |

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| 2. JOB PURPOSE |
| To competently and safely provide dedicated, skilled surgical assistance for minor and major procedures during elective surgical lists**.**  To act as a link between the ward and operating theatre to provide continuity of patient care.  Responsible for the delivery of evidence based patient care within the multi-disciplinary team to ensure high quality patient care.  This role is integral to the development of surgical services to ensure that the standard of care delivery is safe, effective, efficient, equitable, timely, and person-centred.  Support the supervision of junior staff/ surgical doctor trainees and development of standards and improvement of surgical services within the organisation. |

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| **3. DIMENSIONS** |
| The operating theatre suites cover elective and emergency 24 hour cover.  Within the suites all aspects of care for inpatients and day case patients are provided pre, intra and post operatively.  Elective and emergency cases are carried out within the department inclusive of Ophthalmology, ENT, Head and Neck, Dental, Vascular, General Surgery including Upper Gastrointestinal, Colorectal, Laparoscopic surgery, Breast, Breast reconstruction, Urology, Gynaecology, Obstetrics, elective and trauma Orthopaedics and Plastic surgery.  Pre, intra and post-operative care is provided for major, intermediate and minor surgery and high/low dependency patients, providing a safe and supportive environment to deliver a high standard of care for patients within the theatre suite.  The post holder(s) will provide highly specialised dedicated surgical assistance across all surgical specialities within the department.  The post holder(s) is responsible to ensure that they comply with CPD requirements relevant to the SFA role.  The post holder(s) is expected to ensure that they keep their knowledge and skills regarding new techniques across all surgical specialities up to date. |

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| 4. ORGANISATIONAL POSITION |
| Head Of Diagnostics, Theatres and Ambulatory Care  I  Operational Manager (Theatres)  I  Theatre Co-ordinator – Senior Charge Nurse  I I  Surgical First Assistant Team Leader  I  Theatre Practitioner  I  Associate Theatre Practitioner  I  Healthcare Support Worker |

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| 5. ROLE OF DEPARTMENT OR SECTION |
| SFAs provide dedicated surgical assistance across all specialities and so are required to keep themselves up to date with recent developments across **all** surgical specialities.  The role of the SFA service is to ensure the availability of appropriately skilled surgical assistants as required for elective surgery. |

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| 6. KEY RESULT AREAS |
| Clinical Surgical First Assistant Skills – Tasks and ResponsibilitiesResponsible for the assessment of care needs to include simple and complex clinical problems of the patient.  1. SFA specific duties include but are not limited to:-  * Pre- and post-operative patient visiting to enhance individualised patient care and provide the communication link between theatre, patient and ward to highlight any potential care issues or concerns. * Directs and assists patient positioning to allow for adequate surgical access. * Undertakes tissue viability assessment and utilises appropriate pressure relieving devices as appropriate for surgical position and surgery type. * Performs and supervises appropriate skin preparation and surgical draping prior to surgery * Performs skin and tissue retraction (superficial and deep layers). * Handling of tissues and manipulation of organs to facilitate surgical exposure and access. * Appropriate handling and use of surgical instruments across various specialities. * Male/female catheterisation. * Cutting of sutures and ties both deep and superficial. * Performs appropriate forms of haemostasis to secure and maintain a clear operating field. * Performs appropriate use of suction apparatus dependant on surgical speciality and tissue type to provide a clear operating field and also as a form of surgical retraction. * Performs indirect application of electrosurgical devices under direct supervision. * Performs camera manipulation during minimal invasive surgery to provide a clear view of the operating field and when necessary wider anatomical structures to allow for re-assessment of procedure progress and planning. * Assists with wound closure. * Application of wound dressing. * Undertakes and supervises safe patient transfer and handover to recovery staff.   **Clinical SFA Enhanced Skills**   * Performs superficial layer and skin wound closure by way of suturing, staples or skin glue. * Perform haemostasis by direct application of diathermy under direct supervision of the surgeon. * Performs surgical knot tying of blood vessels. * Secures wound drains. * Performs local anaesthetic wound infiltration in line with professional responsibilities for the safe administration of medicines.   *Occasionally, the post holder may be required to perform other surgical skills not detailed above to meet specific surgical speciality requirements.*     1. Responsible for the development, implementation and evaluation of programmes of patient care for the patient whose needs may be predictable or unpredictable and/or unstable and changing to ensure delivery of a high standard of care. 2. Identifies patient need requirements during surgical procedures which are frequently unpredictable and display the knowledge and skills to act accordingly. 3. Establish and maintain effective communication with individuals and groups relating to difficult or complex matters and overcome any problems in communication to ensure that appropriate information is shared and patient needs are met. 4. Initiate and support initiatives which deliver enhanced levels of patient care and client satisfaction. 5. Manages and drives change through planning, communication and action within the multidisciplinary team to ensure that objectives are met. 6. Is aware and works within all Policies and Guidelines, National, Forth Valley and local. Participates in local service developments through steering/working groups to enhance the delivery of the SFA service. 7. The SFA must keep themselves up to date with both Local and National Guidelines in relation to the SFA role and ensure that they contribute to the body of Local and National knowledge to promote the development of this role within a robust Clinical Governance Framework. 8. Actively participates in staff appraisal. 9. Leads audit and actively participates in research to continually improve the SFA service and ultimately patient care. 10. Act as a positive role model for all disciplines of staff. 11. Provides support to others within the team.   Delivers all aspects of care in line with professional code of conduct and performance. |

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| 7. EQUIPMENT AND SYSTEMS USED |
| The post holder must have the knowledge and skills necessary to use all equipment in all surgical speciality areas in line with local policies and procedures and as extended or advanced practitioners have such in-depth knowledge to enable to resolve problematical technical issues as they arise.  Examples of equipment and machinery used:  **Information Technology:**  Online incident reporting system (Safeguard)  Theatre management system  Email  Intranet training system.  **Moving & Handling:**  Patient transfer slides / boards  Operating table and heavy (>15kg) attachments  Instrument Sets  Patient trolleys  Video stacking systems  Specific specialised equipment.  Pressure relieving devices.  **Medical Devices: In-depth use and trouble shooting of various devices such as :-**  Electro-surgery machines.  Laproscopic (camera, light source, carbon dioxide insufflators) systems.  Endoscopes plus endoscopy equipment.  Operating microscope.  Tourniquet machines.  Surgical Instrumentation.  Ligasure.  Harmonic scalpel.  **Record keeping**  All records created in the course of the business of NHS Forth Valley are corporate records and are public records under the terms of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 1937. This includes email messages and other electronic records. The post holder is responsible to ensure appropriate records of work in NHS Forth Valley are completed in a timely manner and manage those records in keeping with the NHS Forth Valley Records Management Policy. For example:-   1. Maintains patient records in accordance with relevant professional code and NHS Forth Valley standards. 2. Ensures correct use of computerised systems i.e. ‘OPERA/TRAK and ensures that all relevant patient/professional information is entered accurately. 3. Ensures own ~~SCP~~SFA logbook is accurate and up to date and stored as per local guidelines. |

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| 8. ASSIGNMENT AND REVIEW OF WORK |
| Although the post holders are line managed by the Theatre Cordinators, they are collectively responsible for:-   1. The management of the SFA team to ensure surgical skills are appropriately deployed. 2. Ensure that duty rotas are compiled in an efficient manner to ensure SFA availability when required and sustainability of the SFA service in line with the NHS Forth Valley Roistering Policy. 3. Work within statutes and guidelines of the Nursing and Midwifery Council/HCPC and National, Forth Valley and local agreed policies, protocols and procedures. 4. Anticipate problems/needs of the SCP/ SFA service and take steps to resolve these. 5. Ensure that policies and procedures relevant to the role are developed, reviewed regularly and updated. 6. Ensure that patient information relevant to the role are developed, regularly reviewed and updated 7. Ensure they receive and respond positively to regular feedback and appraisal relating to all aspects of the SFA role to ensure lifelong learning and development to continually deliver a high quality of patient care at all times. |

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| **9. DECISIONS AND JUDGEMENTS** |
| The post holder must always work within the Nursing and Midwifery Council Code of Conduct or the Health Professions Council Standards for Proficiency.  The post holder will be required to use their own initiative and be able to make sound decisions, however they must recognise their own limitations and actively seek out guidance and supervision when required.  Critically examines the issues of accountability, responsibility and role limitations within the SFA role, service and across professional boundaries.  The post holder will be required to use own judgement whilst observing patient’s condition and should report any change in care to relevant disciplines.  The post holder will be required to use rapid judgement in the assessment and treatment of patients efficiently and appropriately in all clinical situations.  The post holder requires the ability to remain objective and supportive of others at all times.  The post holder will be able to assess the skill mix and ensure appropriate resources are available.  The post holder will also ensure theatre sessions are utilised effectively. |

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| 10. MOST CHALLENGING/DIFFICULT PARTS OF THE JOB |
| In-depth knowledge of a wide variety of clinical specialities and procedures including variations of simple and complex tasks.  The post-holder will be required to constantly prioritise their workload to best manage patients safely and effectively in a constantly changing environment within limited resources.  The post- holder requires to adapt to the variety of situations that they may be presented with as a result of changing clinical and departmental scenarios.  The post-holder is required to work within a multi-disciplinary team which may have inherent tensions due to differing priorities.-  Dealing with frequent exposure to distressing circumstances e.g. dealing with adverse patient outcomes, supporting colleagues with emotional or professional needs.  Possessing the knowledge and skills to work competently within a wide variety of surgical specialities.  The post-holder regularly has to respond to the unpredictability of the emergency service provided, relocating staff accordingly, communicating with medical and other perioperative colleagues regarding prioritisation, ensuring that equipment and instruments are reprocessed as necessary.  The post-holder is required to work in conditions where breaks are unpredictable due to the nature and demands of the environment.  Meal breaks are often disturbed by the unpredictability of the patients’ needs and emergency situations, which require immediate attention.  The post-holder is required to work after their normal finishing time when required to ensure that all scheduled procedures are completed and patient is safely transferred to the recovery unit (daily). |

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| **11. COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS** |
| * Communicates effectively with patients and carers, ensuring their involvement in decision making regarding their care, where possible. * Actively participates and communicates as an effective and competent member of the multidisciplinary team. * Demonstrate the ability to effectively listen to other points of view. * Actively communicates with all colleagues within the organisation in a professional manner. * Communicates continuously on routine, , complex and sensitive matters with a wide range of health care workers and patients. * Communicate information on a regular basis with regard to Theatre activity and managerial issues within the sphere of responsibility, reporting to appropriate Senior Charge Nurse and other disciplines as necessary. * The post holder is required to adapt their communications skills to meet the differing needs of patients and to overcome barriers to communication such as physical, mental or learning disabilities, language barriers, anxiety, confusion, clinical conditions e.g. stroke. * The post holder may have to play a role in dealing with distressed, upset, angry or anxious patients, carers, relatives and staff. The role of the post holder is to use communication skills to de-escalate such situations to then ensure the safety of themselves and other patients and staff by managing the situation appropriately. * Uses motivational, reassurance, empathetic and negotiating skills when dealing with anxious or pre-medicated patients. * The post holder is required to establish and maintain effective external networking links by collaborating with groups’ out with the department in order that the SCP/ SFA service is effectively benchmarked against best practice to ensure the integrity of NHS Forth Valley. * Communicate the vision and the rationale of the SCP service provided within the multidisciplinary team and beyond. * Network with others of the multi-disciplinary team in developing and implementing best practice within the Perioperative and ~~SCP~~ SFA role. * Manages complaints and incidents within agreed protocols and liaises effectively with parties involved. * The post holder will possess effective interpersonal skills and participate in cross boundary working. |

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| **12. PHYSICAL, MENTAL, EMOTIONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEMANDS OF THE JOB** |
| **Physical Skills (Several times per every shift)**     * Insertion/removal of urinary catheters male/female. * Assembly and use of instrumentation including fine tools e.g. harmonic scalpel and drills. * Laparoscopic instruments and laparoscopic camera manipulation requiring standing in one position for long periods of time and intense concentration. * Handling of surgical prosthesis and implants. * Application of haemostats or liga-clips to blood vessels to allow for division of structures or to stop bleeding. * Requires a high level of precision, hand eye co-ordination, dexterity and speed in an emergency situation e.g. haemorrhage. * Frequently assists with moving unconscious and conscious patients from bed to operating table and vice versa; frequently moves unconscious patients either up or down the transfer trolley. * Frequently positions unconscious patient in lateral position several times a shift and frequently lifts anaesthetised patients legs into the Lloyd Davies position ensuring protective movements are used at all times to avoid damage to limbs. * The safe and appropriate use of medical devices when surgical assisting and the ability to trouble shoot problems with equipment when required. * Daily movement and setting up of theatre equipment e.g. laparoscopic equipment, diathermy machines to appropriate settings and locations per speciality etc.   **Physical Effort (several times per shift)**   * Frequent pulling, pushing of trolleys, beds, operating tables with patients. * Frequently pushing heavy equipment ˃15kg. * Frequently lifting heavy instrument trays ˃15kg. * Frequently standing still for long periods of time (minimum 1hr) in a restricted position. * Frequently wearing lead aprons (˃5kg) for long periods of time. * On a daily basis, whole shift – wearing of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) compromising personal comfort e.g. lead apron, surgical masks, surgical gown, surgical gloves, protective eye wear. * Standing for long periods of time without breaks and often maintaining long spells of tissue retraction.   **Mental Demands (Frequently every shift)**   * High level of situational awareness to rapidly identify a change in patient condition or change of routine path of procedure * High intensity concentration required for surgical assisting. * During each shift concentration, decision making and organisational skills to ensure a high quality ofSFA service whilst coping with personality dynamics, sudden staff shortages and unpredictable problems, such as equipment failure, changes in patients condition and/or sudden change in procedure to be carried out requiring re-focussing on a separate patient care pathway and provide appropriate clinical judgement and direction such as informing scrub team of urgent change of patient needs and equipment. * Daily- concentration required when checking documents/patients notes. * Concentration required when conducting ‘surgical pause’ as part of the WHO Safer Surgery Checklist * Concentration required due to unpredictable work pattern e.g. reallocation of the workload, change in theatre lists. * Daily – high concentration required during complex procedures, adapting quickly and effectively to any change in procedure and respond immediately and appropriately to deterioration of patient condition. * Provide support for junior staff whenever changes arise due to worsening of patient condition. * Maintain long periods of intense concentration. * Concentration required when observing patients and team behaviours which may become unpredictable. * Supervise, assist and assess junior staff. * On a daily basis working in false lighting. * Regularly work in blackout conditions whilst maintaining long periods of intense concentration e.g. assisting with laparoscopic procedures. * All of the above are subject to frequent interruptions for team members, telephone and pager requests, demands from the surgical team etc.   **Emotional Demands**   * On a daily basis working in a small team within the larger theatre team. * On a daily basis working closely with medical staff and the often changing demands of surgery. * Working in blackout conditions during laparoscopic surgery. * Negotiation with other parties on a daily basis as and when required, when a satisfactory conclusion has been or not been reached. * Communication with distressed/anxious/worried patients/carers due to worry about anaesthetic, surgical procedures, uncertain diagnosis and recovery (daily). * Caring for patients undergoing life saving/changing surgery (every shift). * Caring for terminally ill during palliative procedures (regularly). * Looking after trauma patients. * Working with stressed individuals – patients/colleagues (every shift). * Dealing with sudden and often traumatic death in the theatre environment (occasional less than one shift per month). * Performing last offices on patients who have died within theatre (occasional).   **Environmental (Working) Demands**   * Exposure to highly unpleasant working conditions; dirty sharps, diathermy plume, bloody theatre linen, body fluids, formaldehyde, body fluid/blood splashes, noise, blood borne diseases, body parts in a highly stressful environment. * Prolonged (up to 7 hours per shift) exposure to gloves. * On a daily basis wearing of specialised, provided theatre clothing, footwear, hair covering, goggles and facemasks. * Surgical hand scrub with brush (+5mins) with strong antiseptic solution, * Extremes of temperature on a daily basis. * Exposure to formalin whenever specimens are taken to determine patients’ treatment. * . * Exposure to X-Ray during urological, vascular and orthopaedic procedures which requires the use of heavy lead coat to worn underneath surgical gowns leading to extremes of temperatures * Working in artificial /false lighting on a daily basis. * Frequently working in black-out conditions during laparoscopic procedures. * Working in an enclosed environment on a daily basis. |

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| 13. KNOWLEDGE, TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED TO DO THE JOB |
| 1. Registered General Nurse or Operating Department Practitioner. 2. Educated to degree level. 3. Post qualifying 3-5 years theatre experience, developing a high level of knowledge/skill and in depth knowledge of a wide range of surgical procedures within numerous specialities. 4. Holds or working towards UK accredited Surgical Care Practitioner qualification. 5. Holds or working towards UK accredited Post Graduate Basic Surgical Skills Course 6. Advanced organisational skills essential. 7. Advanced negotiation, communication and interpersonal skills essential. 8. Ability to work alone or as part of a team 9. Ability to communicate effectively across the multiprofessional team |

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| **14. JOB DESCRIPTION AGREEMENT** | |
| I agree that the above Job Description is an accurate reflection of my duties and responsibilities at the date of signing.  Job Holder’s Signature:  Manager’s Signature: | Date:  Date: |