How to become a Surgical Care Practitioner (SCP)

Use the following flow chart as a guide to becoming an SCP

What are the basic requirements for training as an SCP

Registered healthcare professional (eg. registered nurse, registered operating department practitioner, registered physiotherapist).
Clinical supervisor support from Consultant grade surgeon.
Clinical access to patients in clinics, wards and operating theatres.
Acceptance on academic training course.

Experience of caring for surgical patients since qualifying (recommended minimum 12 months).
Support from manager and agreed funding for job.
Linked to a Surgical Team.
Appropriate indemnity cover.

What is the minimum academic standard for training?

The minimum academic standard for the Surgical Care Practitioner programme is undergraduate degree level (level 6); the University of Plymouth programme is provided at masters level (level 7).

Studies are normally undertaken part-time, which means attending set study days whilst also fulfilling a clinical role.

The complete training for an SCP is now recommended to continue for 2 years.
Many training posts have the academic training course as a condition of employment.

What type of assessment does the course involve?

Although the courses vary there will be methods of assessment in theory and in practice.

These usually incorporate academic writing such as essays and reflection to demonstrate knowledge and understanding, as well as witnessed assessment of competence in the clinical situation.

A range of skills and activities will be assessed across all areas where the SCP might work (pre-operative, intra-operative and post-operative care). The minimum expected standard is stated as:

“The assessment of operative skills will meet the same standard as that for surgeons in training who are performing the same procedures” (DH 2006).

Use the following flow chart as a guide to becoming an SCP

1: Do you fulfill the basic requirements for training as an SCP

(See Training standard and requirements)

Yes

No

Don’t know

Go to Question 2

2: Are you sure you know what the SCP role entails?

Yes

No

Don’t know

Go to Question 3

3: Have you already done further training related to surgery?

Yes

No

Don’t know

Go to Question 4

4: Are you sure this is the role for you?

Yes

No

Don’t know

Apply for an advertised post.
Discuss with your manager about developing this role in your current workplace.

Go to Question 5

5: Would you prefer/need to change employer?

Yes

They have SCP posts here

No

They don’t have SCP posts here

Apply for an advertised position.

Go to Question 6

6: How do I get on an academic training course?

I have an SCP training post

I DO NOT have an SCP training post

Go to Question 7

7: Can I do anything before I start the course?

Yes

If you have some time before the course starts

Go to Question 8

If you have not started academically for a while

They have SCP posts here

Apply for an advertised position.

No

Ask your current employer/surgeons if interested in developing an SCP role.

Go to Question 9

If you require any part of this leaflet in larger print, please contact admissions, contact details above.

South Devon Healthcare
North Devon NHS Foundation Trust
Plymouth Hospitals
South West

Royal Devon and Exeter
NHS Foundation Trust

Royal Cornwall Hospitals
NHS Trust

Faculty of Health University of Plymouth, Drake Circus, Plymouth. PL4 8AA.
Tel: +44 (0)1752 586723
E-mail: hswpostgrad@plymouth.ac.uk
www.plymouth.ac.uk/courses

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