



Instrumental to Patient CareSM

April 12, 2012

Memo of Support

The International Association of Healthcare Central Services Materiel Management (IAHCSMM) strongly supports A.8620-a (Bronson)/S.5155-b (Grisanti), certification for central sterile supply personnel in hospitals and ambulatory surgical centers.

IAHCSMM represents approximately 18,000 Central Sterile Supply Department (CSSD) professionals in the U.S. and abroad who facilitate the procurement, management and processing of surgical instruments, supplies and equipment. For more than 50 years, IAHCSMM has been committed to promoting patient safety and preventing infections by providing educational and professional development opportunities to CSSD professionals.

CSSD professionals are those responsible for ensuring that instrumentation and equipment used in medical and surgical procedures is properly cleaned, disinfected, inspected and sterilized prior to patient use. Clearly, this is a critical component in the delivery of quality patient care; unfortunately, the Central Sterile Supply profession is one whose value and contributions continue to be underestimated or overlooked by some healthcare organizations and state health officials.

IAHCSMM believes that CSSD professionals in every facility throughout the nation must receive ongoing, formal training and become certified in order to perform their daily duties safely, effectively and consistently. New Jersey is the only state that requires certification for CSSD professionals. The frightening reality is that in some facilities across the state, CSSD professionals are performing this essential function in the **absence of any** formal training and certification requirements.

Here are several reasons why certification should become law:

- The Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation (AAMI) standards recommends certification for individuals responsible for sterilization activities and managing the Central Service processes.
- Joint Commission Patient Safety goals require rigid quality control processes in order to prevent patient injury.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates the direct costs associated with hospital infections are as high as **\$45 billion** each year. http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/pdf/Scott_CostPaper.pdf
- In 2002, there were **1.7 million healthcare associated infections and 99,000** deaths. <http://www.hhs.gov/ash/initiatives/hai/index.html>
- Beginning October 2012, Medicare payments to hospitals will be tied to protecting patients from infections.

IAHCSMM is working tirelessly to raise the bar on knowledge advancement and professionalism within the Central Sterile Supply discipline, and to promote certification nationwide. This bill will help promote healthcare quality and reduce the risk of hospital-acquired infections.

Once again, we urge immediate passing of A.8620-a/S.5155-b. This bill will help make patients safer. Thank you.