

Robotic surgery

with a nurse specialist as first assistant

For the first time in Denmark robotic surgery is performed with a nurse specialist assisting the surgeon during the procedure. This role usually has been performed by fully trained doctors or specialists registrars.

In October 2008 the Department of Urology, Aalborg Hospital introduced robotic surgery. Two years later and for the first time in Denmark a theatre nurse has been trained for the specific task of assisting the surgeon performing robotically assisted operations. Initially the assisting role was undertaken by a changing staff of doctors. It was found that the surgical procedure had a much smoother and uncomplicated course if an experienced first assistant participated at each and every procedure. This new function ensures quality, continuity and experience. The education of the nurse specialist consists of theoretical, practical and clinical training.

Qualifications:

- Authorization as a nurse
- Experience as a theatre nurse, including experience with robotic assisted surgery
- Practical skills at a complex level in terms of ability to perform surgical procedures with precision, calmness, flexibility and security
- Completed and passed course in laparoscopy, module 1 & 2 (www.MIUC.dk)
- Diploma in clinical nursing
- Motivating and inspiring personality, will and ability to cooperate in a team setting

Functions:

Apart from acting as a theatre nurse, the nurse specialist is acting as first assistant while the surgeon is performing complex robotically assisted operations. The nurse specialist is standing by the patient practising intra-abdominal, laparoscopic procedures in collaboration with the prime operating surgeon, who is placed at a console in the same room.

Advantages using a specific trained nurse specialist as first assistant:

- Increased flexibility
- Competent and stable assistant (same person assisting at each and every procedure)
- Optimization of the surgical planning including competence of making the robot ready for surgical use, robotic docking and also skin closure and dressing of portsides (taking a lead position nursing the patient pre-, per- and post-operatively in theatre)



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