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Academic report on the role of a surgeon in the health and social care section.

Introduction

A surgeon is a specialized medical professional within the health and social care section dedicated to treating diseases of injuries and deformities through physical intervention and operative procedures. This report examines the intricate nature of the surgical role of the high-level skills required for patients' safety and the strategic methods used to maintain clinical excellence in a high-pressure environment. As outlined by the General Medical Council (2024), surgeons must maintain a high standard of professional conduct and clinical competence to ensure patient safety.

The role of a surgeon: duties and responsibilities

The role of a surgeon is multifaceted, extending far beyond the operating theater. It is a position of leadership within a multidisciplinary team requiring coordination with anesthesiologists, nurses, and radiologists (Royal College of Surgeons of England, 2023).

- **Pre-operative assessment:** surgeons are responsible for diagnosing conditions and determining if the surgeon is the most appropriate course of action. This involves reviewing patient history, interpreting diagnostic imaging (e.g. MRI CT scans), and obtaining informed consent by explaining risks and benefits to the patient (general medical council 2024)
- **Intraoperative procedure:** the core duty is performing the operation. Whether it is a routine appendectomy, the surgeon must maintain extreme focus and lead the team through the surgical safety checklist to prevent errors (the world health organization (WHO) (2025). emphasizes that the use of such checklists significantly reduces surgical complications and mortality)
- **Post operative care** post-surgery the surgery the surgeon must monitor the patient for complications such as sepsis or hemorrhage. They manage the recovery plan by providing instructions for rehabilitation (NHS England 2025).

Three essential skills for the role

3.1 manual dexterity and psychomotor skill

Surgeons require exceptional hand eye coordination and the ability to perform precise movements in confined spaces.

- **Why is it essential** in surgery a different single millimeter can be the difference between a successful procedure and permanent nerve damage or life-threatening bleeding.
- **Role specific examples** during a laparoscopic surgery a surgeon must manipulate long instruments while looking at a 2D screen, requiring a high level of spatial awareness and steady hands to clip a blood vessel without damaging surrounding tissue.

3.2 decision making under pressure

The ability to remain calm and make rapid evidence-based decisions is critical.

- **Why it is essential:** surgical environments are unpredictable when patients' vitals drop, or an unexpected anatomical variation is found the surgeon cannot hesitate: they must adapt the surgical plan instantly to save the patient's life (royal colleges of surgeon of england 2023)
- **Role specific example:** if a surgeon encounters unexpected heavy bleeding during a routine abdominal surgery, they must decide in second whether to continue laparoscopically or convert to an open surgery to gain better control.

3.3 effective communication and leadership

Surgeons act as captains of the ship in the OR. They must communicate clearly with entire team.

- **Why is it essential:** poor communication is a leading cause of medical errors. A surgeon must be able to give clear instructions to assistants and nurses while also listening to concerns from the anesthesiologist regarding the patient's stability (NHS England 2025)
- **Role specific example:** During complex 10 hours procedure a surgeon uses closed loop communication (stating a command and having the team member repeat it back) to ensure that the correct medication or instrument is used at the correct it.

Strategy for skill improvements

4.1 strategy 1 simulation-based training (SBT)

To improve manual dexterity, surgeons should engage in high-fidelity simulations training

- **How it helps:** using VR simulators or “synthetic tissue” model allows the surgeon to allow the surgeon to practice repetitive tasks like suturing or vessel ligation without any risk to a human patient. It builds muscle memories which increase speed and accuracy during real operations.

4.2 strategy2: reflective practice and M&M conferences.

To improve decision making, surgeons should participate in morbidity and mortality M&M conferences.

How it helps this is a formal strategy where surgeons meet peer review cases that had complications by reflection.

By reflecting on what went wrong and why a certain decision was made the surgeon develops clinical intuition, helping them avoid similar pitfalls in the future (general medical council 2024)

4.3 strategy3 non-technical skill for surgeon (NOTSS) workshops

To improve leadership and communication, surgeons can attend specialized behavioral workshops.

How it helps: These workplaces focus on situational awareness and teamwork. According to the World Health Organization, (2025) practicing communication drills in a controlled environment helps mitigate hierarchy-related barriers, making it easier. The junior staff speak up if they see a mistake by doing so a surgeon learns how to manage these barriers which significantly improves patient safety.

Conclusion:

The role of surgeon is one of the most demanding health and social care, requiring a blend of technical brilliance and emotional resilience. By mastering dexterity, decision-making, and leadership and by committing to lifelong learning through simulation and reflection, surgeons ensure the highest standard of care. As the sector evolves with new technology, these core skills remain the foundation of successful surgical outcomes (royal colleges of surgeon of England 2023)

Reference List

1. **General Medical Council (2024). Good Medical Practice. London: GMC.**
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3. **NHS England (2025). Patient Safety Strategy in Surgical Care.**
4. **World Health Organization. WHO guidelines for safe surgery. Safe surgery saves lives. Geneva, WHO**
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