

### Improving Emergency Preparedness

*ASC Focus*

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#### KEY LEARNINGS

- Hire experienced nurses
- Ask for references
- Provide strictly the tools and permissions needed for their roles

“I was not properly trained” is a common excuse after a compliance problem surfaces at a healthcare facility, says Douglas Yang, a partner in the Los Angeles, California, office of law firm Sheppard Mullin.

Yang has seen how the likelihood of such a scenario increases with reliance on part-time, agency, travel or pro re nata (PRN) labor. “Fulltime employees benefit from consistent training on a recurring basis,” he says. “With part-time staff, that consistency is harder to maintain.” It is not usually the big picture around security and compliance that gets lost, he says. Problems typically arise in the gray areas—the ASC-specific details and nuances. “Every ASC has its own ways of doing things, sometimes down to very fine details, and making sure part-time staff understand and follow those expectations can be a greater challenge.”

At UroPartners Surgery Center in Des Plaines, Illinois, part-time and PRN staff are a regular part of the team. Some work only one or two days a week, while others pick up what the ASC calls “princess shifts”—short blocks to help cover the midday rush or provide lunch relief. Administrator Catherine McCue, RN, acknowledges that those who spend less time in the ASC are more likely to miss some in-person education and training. Still, she stresses that this cannot be an excuse for security and compliance shortcomings. “We are very regulated, and surveyors are looking to ensure our entire team knows what they must do, even those here less often than others,” she says.

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#### Attorneys

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