Ambulatory surgery centers (ASCs) face less of a staffing challenge than hospital ORs.

In all, 69% had no open RN positions, and 82% had no openings for surgical technologists (STs). The average number of positions open was 0.5 for RNs and 0.2 for STs.

Only 27% said recruiting is “very difficult,” much lower than the 45% in hospitals, according to the OR Manager Salary/Career Survey.

Vacancy and turnover rates are low. When positions are open, they take less time to fill than in the hospital.

ASCs have an advantage over hospitals in attracting nurses because they generally are open only on weekdays and do not need call coverage for nights, weekends, and holidays. They mainly perform routine elective surgery, and most patients are not as severely ill as those in the hospital.

The majority of ASCs—56%—still do not hire RNs without OR experience. That’s a big contrast to hospitals, where only 12% will not hire RNs who lack experience in surgery.

One ASC manager wrote that many applicants for positions seem to be in the 45- to 55-year-old age group.

“They are interested in a slower-paced workload that does not require call,” she said. She uses early retirees for per-diem positions.

The OR Manager Career/Salary Survey for Ambulatory Surgery Centers was mailed in May to managers at 609 ASCs with 111 surveys returned, a rate of 18%. Results of the survey relating to management, including salaries and benefits, will be in the October issue.
Does your ASC hire RNs without OR experience?

- No: 56%
- Often: 12%
- Occasionally: 32%

Do you routinely use overtime to staff your ASC ORs?

- Yes: 35%
- No: 65%

Has recruiting become more difficult in the past year?

- RNs:
  - Yes: 59%
  - No: 40%

- STs:
  - Yes: 34%
  - No: 56%