Ambulatory surgery centers (ASCs) continue to have low staff vacancies and turnover.

The 2006 annual OR Manager Salary / Career Survey for ambulatory surgery centers was mailed in May to managers at 600 ASCs, with 112 surveys returned, a rate of 19%. Results of the survey relating to management, including salaries and benefits, will be in the October issue.

In all, 67% of the ASCs report they have no vacant RN positions, and 79% have no vacant surgical technologist (ST) positions. The average number of positions open is 0.6 for RNs and 0.3 for STs. Vacancy rates are 6% for RNs, and 5% for STs.

ASCs have lower staff turnover rates than hospitals. The average RN staff turnover rate is 6.4%, compared to 7.3% for hospitals. The ST turnover was 3.5% compared to 6.9%.

Although ASCs have fewer vacancies and less turnover, ASC managers face difficulties in recruiting.

About half, 51%, say recruiting staff has become more difficult in the past year, and 77% report it is at least somewhat difficult to recruit experienced OR nurses.

While two-thirds of hospitals are hiring new graduate nurses to fill vacant positions, only 27% of ASCs report they hire new graduates. Hospitals are also more willing to hire RNs without OR experience (92%), compared to 58% of the ASCs.

A few changes between the 2005 and 2006 ASC survey data:

- 66% of ASCs offer OR training for nurses, compared to 62% in 2005.
- RN positions stay open an average of 9 weeks compared to 7 weeks in 2005, and ST positions are open an average of 6 weeks compared to 5 weeks last year.

### Open FTE positions in ASC ORs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>No open positions</th>
<th>Average number of open positions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RNs</td>
<td>67% (n=108)</td>
<td>0.6 (n=108)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STs</td>
<td>79% (n=97)</td>
<td>0.3 (n=97)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Average staff turnover rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Turnover Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RNs</td>
<td>6% (n=94)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STs</td>
<td>3% (n=81)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Does your ASC hire RNs without OR experience?

- No 42%
- Occasionally 42%
- Often 16%

### Do you routinely use overtime to staff your ORs?

- Yes 23%
- No 77%
What percentage of budgeted FTE positions are open?

- RNs: 6% (n=29)
- STs: 5% (n=18)

Has recruiting become more difficult in the past year?

- RNs: No 49%, Yes 51%
- STs: No 56%, Yes 36%

Do you offer OR training for nurses?

- Yes, elsewhere: 34%
- Yes, at the ASC: 66%

Do you offer OR training for nurses?