



CSSD Workflow Optimization Guide

Practical steps to improve efficiency and patient safety in the central sterile supply department.

Map the flow

Decontamination → inspection and assembly → packaging → sterilization → cooling → storage → distribution.
Time each step for a typical tray and count rejects at each point; bottlenecks usually appear at the packing table and at unloading.

Standardise packaging

- Assign a reel width, length and pouch size to each instrument set and print it on the set list.
- Stock about six reel widths plus a gusseted reel for bowls.
- Use self-seal pouches only where a sealer is unavailable.

Colour-code monitoring

Where steam, EO and plasma sterilizers are used together, choose indicators with clearly different colour changes and store them in separate labelled bins.

Work instructions and stock control

Laminated one-page instructions at every packing station; minimum/maximum stock levels for each consumable with lot numbers recorded on receipt; one supplier for tapes, strips, pouches and reels simplifies ordering and training.

Review rejects weekly

Wet packs, torn pouches, incomplete indicator changes and failed seals each point to a specific cause — overloaded carts, wrong pouch size, poor steam quality or sealer drift. A short weekly review of the reject log is the fastest route to improvement.

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