

Clinical Perfusion

Nature of the Profession

A perfusionist is a certified professional who deals with all phases of regulating and controlling blood flow outside the body, a process called extracorporeal circulation. The perfusionist has the knowledge to operate extracorporeal circulation equipment during any medical situation in which it is necessary to support or temporarily replace the patient's circulatory or respiratory function.

Perfusion procedures involve specialized instrumentation and advanced life support techniques, and may include a variety of related functions.

Perfusion is still a relatively new occupation. Perfusionists may be employed in hospitals, by surgeons, or as employees of a medical service group. Their schedules typically include weekend and night duty, including emergency call. They may also work in an on-call system, depending upon the number of perfusionists employed by the institution.

APTITUDES

- Conscientiousness and reliability
- Manual dexterity and mechanical aptitude
- Ability to follow detailed instructions
- Emotional stability and confidence for handling the demands of the surgeons

EDUCATION

Admission to a clinical perfusion program requires a bachelor's degree. Programs are generally one to four years in length, depending on the program design, objectives, prerequisites, and student qualifications.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS IN NEBRASKA

- University of Nebraska Medical Center – Omaha (M)

LICENSURE / CERTIFICATION

To become a certified clinical perfusionist, an individual must first have a bachelor of science degree and then complete a one- or two- year perfusion education program that has been accredited by the Committee on Allied Health Education and Accreditation. A certifying examination given by the American Board of Cardiovascular Perfusion (ABCP) is also required by most states including Nebraska.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

American Academy of Cardiovascular Perfusion

Web address: www.theaacp.com

American Board of Cardiovascular Perfusion (ABCP) - Certification Organization

Web Address: www.abcp.org

American Society of Extra-Corporeal Technology (AmSECT)

Web Address: www.amsect.org