



News Announcement – For Immediate Release

Contact:

Jeffrey Espinoza, RCP, RRT-NPS
Advanced Practice Commission Chair
CSRC
951-486-4261
jespinoza@co.riverside.ca.us

Abbie Rosenberg, RCP, RRT
Executive Officer
CSRC
831-763-CSRC (2772)
arosenberg@csrc.org

THE CALIFORNIA SOCIETY FOR RESPIRATORY CARE ANNOUNCES RELEASE OF THE WHITE PAPER, "REGISTERED RESPIRATORY THERAPIST (RRT) AS A MINIMUM TO PRACTICE RESPIRATORY CARE IN THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

- WHITE PAPER SUGGESTING THE RRT MINIMUM STANDARD -
WATSONVILLE, California, December 11, 2006 – The California Society for Respiratory Care, has released a position paper that supports a paradigm shift in the practice of Respiratory Care.

The California Society for Respiratory Care (CSRC), California's largest Respiratory Care Professional Society, known for patient of care advocacy, excellence, the promotion of healthcare safety and advancement professional practice; is pleased to release a Position Paper regarding Respiratory Care Practitioner minimum competency standards required for California state licensure.

This shift in professional structure and practice qualification, is one which calls for and supports the RRT as a minimum requirement to practice respiratory care in the state of California.

Attached is the "White Paper" which was approved for distribution at the Board of Director's meeting (November 11, 2006) in San Jose California.

The4 "White Paper" marks an important milestone for the CSRC as it advocates for greater commitment to patient care and professionalism for Respiratory Care in California.

If you have any questions regarding this document, all inquiries are welcome.



White Paper on RRT as a Minimum:

The Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT) Credential is requisite for obtaining Licensure as a California Respiratory Care Practitioner (RCP).

The California Society for Respiratory Care (CSRC) endorses and supports the establishment of the Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT) credential as the minimum competency requirement for practicing Respiratory Care Practitioners (RCPs) in California.

The CSRC encourages all RCPs to pass the RRT exam as a base competency. The CSRC does not support or condone the elimination of RCPs practicing without an RRT credential *prior to* the enactment of such regulation. The CSRC recommends the use of a “grandfather clause” exemption for licensed RCPs (i.e., licensed prior to the regulation taking effect). After the regulation is enacted, new licensees will be required to take and pass the National Board for Respiratory Care (NBRC) RRT exam or its equivalent in California. The CSRC maintains that after regulation takes effect, all California RCPs take and pass the RRT exam, prior to licensure, as demonstration of minimal competency.

Rationale:

Moving to the RRT as a minimum competency may:

- Increase the safe and practicable utility of California RCPs for all health care consumers.
- Help insure the competent practice of RCPs, increasing safety and quality care for patients in California.
- Match existing RCP educational standards with the appropriate credential based competency.
- Eliminate the identification misnomer of “RRT Eligible.”
- Decrease Respiratory Care Board disciplinary intervention and associated costs.
- Increase credibility and enhance clinical reliance on California RCPs as the cardiopulmonary caregivers/consultants by qualifying RCPs statewide with this higher level of competency testing.
- Move the profession closer to a statewide scope of practice as opposed to individual hospital-regulated scope of the Respiratory Care discipline.

Advantages of RRT qualified RCPs:

The statewide elevated standard will further protect California healthcare consumers in terms of safety and efficacious practice without increasing consumer cost. The new paradigm will set the stage for greater direct RCP reimbursement from healthcare payment providers. The increased baseline competency will enhance the professionalism of RCPs in all areas of practice. RCP educators directly will address the RRT passage mandate as being requisite prior to practice of Respiratory Care in California. Many existing and emerging Respiratory Care programs are geared toward lesser RCP quality curriculum and are frequently accompanied by non transferable course credits; these programs must be required to upgrade to an RRT based curriculum. The RRT based curriculum ensures a uniform and singular statewide standard that is more closely aligned with the majority of programs currently in place.