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Disclosure of Interests

- I am the current President of the National Board for Respiratory Care (NBRC)
- Co-Chair – Sub Committee on Advanced Practice Respiratory Therapist (APRT) – (AARC)
- Member, Respiratory Compromise Institute (RCI) [NAMDRC]
- Salisbury University
  - Assistant to the Provost on Health Care Affairs
  - Associate Dean of the Richard A. Henson School of Science & Technology
  - Director, Respiratory Therapy Program

Objectives

- Review history and current structure of the NBRC
- Define the scope of the profession
- Review the current status of CoARC accredited RC programs
- Describe the challenges of degree advancement
- Explain the current strategy for the NBRC Continuing Competency Program (CCP)
The mission and role of the NBRC

- Where does the NBRC fit with other respiratory care organizations?

The NBRC – Who, What, How

- Was originally formed in November 1960 to credential respiratory therapists
- Has supported the profession through development of national credentials for over 55 years
- Acts to ensure the continued recognition and value of the national credentials
The NBRC is sponsored by four professional organizations...

- American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC)
- American College of Chest Physicians (ACCP)
- American Thoracic Society (ATS)
- American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA)

NBRC Board of Trustees

- AARC 15 respiratory therapists
- ACCP (CHEST) 5 physicians
- ASA 5 physicians
- ATS 5 physicians

- The NBRC also elects one public member to complete the 31-member governing body
How are NBRC examinations developed?

• A five step process:
  o Viability study
  o Personnel survey
  o Job analysis
  o Test specifications
  o Validation study

Not a Static Process

• A job analysis occurs approximately every five years. The process is not one and done. Repeat job analyses ensure the examinations reflect current practice.
• Validation studies correlate test results with on the job performance as rated by an immediate supervisor.
• Examinations assess minimum competency (public protection).
• Examinations are hierarchical in nature (general content is not repeated on specialty examinations).
NBRC Credentials are Standards of Excellence

- Certified Respiratory Therapist (CRT)
- Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT)
- Certified Pulmonary Function Technologist (CPFT)
- Registered Pulmonary Function Technologist (RPFT)
- Neonatal/Pediatric Respiratory Care Specialist (CRT – NPS or RRT – NPS)
- Sleep Disorders Specialist (CRT – SDS or RRT – SDS)
- Adult Critical Care Specialty Examination (RRT – ACCS)

NBRC upholds leading standards for credentialing respiratory care professionals

- Maintains membership in the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE)
- Assures the credentialing programs are accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA)
  - The NBRC was one of the first 4 groups to obtain NCCA accreditation and is the only certifying body to continuously maintain its accreditation since 1977.
Credentialing Evolution Milestones

- 1960/61 ARIT (American Registry of Inhalation Therapists)
- 1969 (AAIT) (later to become the AARC) launches (CRTT) Examination
- 1974 NBRC
- 1978 Last RRT Oral Examinations
- 1983 Entry Level CRT Examination
- 1984 1st Specialty Examination
- 2000 Computer Based Testing Network Opened
- 2002 Continuing Competency Program

NBRC Credentials are recognized by ....

- State licensure agencies
  - Currently, 49 states regulate the practice of respiratory care
    - 46 states currently recognize the CRT credential as the requisite credential for demonstrating competence to enter practice.
    - 3 states – California, Ohio, Arizona - require the RRT credential for initial licensure.
    - 1 state – Alaska – Currently does not have licensure.
Candidate Experience
Applying, Scheduling, Testing-

- School will confirm your graduation directly with the NBRC
- Candidate will apply online at nbrc.org
- Once approved, candidate will schedule a testing appointment at psionline.com at one of over 300 locations
  - Daily testing by computer Monday-Saturday
  - Two sessions per day - 9:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.
  - Note: Beginning May 1, 2017: 100+ additional testing sites will become available
- Candidate will receive examination results immediately after testing
- If successful, candidate will receive certificate package within a few weeks following testing

Candidates Receive Instant Examination Results on the Test Date

- Final score report issued upon leaving the Assessment Center
- Candidate photos printed on the score report
- Reapplication instructions provided if needed
Examination Results

- The NBRC shares examination results with states using the entry-level CRT Examination for licensure
- The NBRC also shares examination results with accredited education programs and the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC)

I have earned my credential, now what?

- Credentials issued by the NBRC are valid for a period of 5 years
- All individuals are required to participate in the NBRC’s Continuing Competency Program to maintain their credentials
- CCP options—
  - CE credit – 30 hours/5 years
    - AARC CRCE approved courses
    - Respiratory care courses accepted by your state licensing board
  - Pass the examination for the highest credential held
  - Pass an examination for a credential you do not currently hold
How do I submit my CE to the NBRC?

• Online at nbrc.org
• Random audit may occur
• Simple and easy
• Can renew via this option up until the day before credential expires
• AARC members can transfer their CRCE electronically to the NBRC!

Judicial & Ethics Policies

• NBRC protects the public and the profession through the Judicial & Ethics Committee
• The Judicial & Ethics Committee takes action against people who:
  o violate testing rules
  o misuse credential trademarks
  o commit practice-related offenses or serious crimes
  o have their state license revoked or suspended
Other NBRC Activities

- Annual active status renewal allows CRTs, RRTs, CRT-NPS, RRT-NPS, CRT-SDS, RRT-SDS, RRT-ACCS, CPFTs and RPFTs to certify active practice under medical direction
  - Quarterly newsletter - NBRC HORIZONS
  - NBRC Directory of active credentialed practitioners
  - Online, searchable directory of all credentialed practitioners
  - Purchase products at reduced fees (i.e., pins, patches, credential verification letters)

What’s New at the NBRC?

- Therapist Multiple-Choice Examination:
  - New exam implemented January 2015
- CSE Examination:
  - Changes implemented January 2015
- PFT Examination:
  - New exam implemented in June 2015
How the TMC is Performing

How the CSE is Performing
Scope of the Profession

Respiratory Care Nationally

Scope of Practice

- Defined state practice acts (legal)
- Limited by Medical Director
Current Status of CoARC Accredited RC programs

Professional Strength

- Approximately 173,000 licensed respiratory therapists in the United States and (American Association for Respiratory Care, 2014)
- Scope of practice not tied to degree but credential
On-the-job trainees / technicians (OJTs)
- Entry level trained (CRT only)
- Advanced level trained (RRT Eligible)

ENTRY TO PRACTICE
- Bachelor degree, 18.10%
- Master's degree, 1.10%
- Associate degree, 80.80%
Status of Education

- 2001 – an Associate degree is required to become a respiratory therapist.
- Training is offered at the postsecondary level by colleges and universities, health sciences centers, vocational-technical institutes and the armed forces.
- As of 12.31.2016
  - 440 CoARC accredited programs
    - 357 (84%) of CoARC-accredited programs award an Associate degree,
    - 65 (15%) award the Bachelor’s degree, and
    - 6 (1%) offer the Master’s degree

Source: 2015 CoARC Report on Accreditation

Source: 2016 CoARC Report on Accreditation
Challenges of Degree Advancement

Source: 2016 CoARC Report on Accreditation
AARC BOD Goals

- Aspiring to 80% of practicing respiratory therapists having earned or being actively working on a bachelor's degree by 2020.
- The most recent survey shows this to be 65% at this time.

http://www.aarc.org/aarc-bod-sets-80-bachelor-degree-goal-by-2020/

An Example of the Problem for Degree Advancement

- An example
  - “Data from the University of Connecticut reveal transfer students from the Connecticut Community Colleges system lost on average 12 transferable college credits when they moved to the flagship university.”
  - “UConn gave the state’s Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee a report that showed 4,799 community college students transferred to the university last year with 54.17 credits per student, but only 42.57 credits per student were applied toward major or general education requirements.”

Transfer Credits at Uconn
Inside Higher Ed
May 8, 2015
Other Issues

- Institutional Autonomy
  - 74 Credit Maximum Transfer
  - 100 & 200 level course cannot directly transfer
  - Course unavailable at the receiving institution cannot fulfill major requirement (e.g., Klingon will not transfer to SU directly, but the credits will.)
  - Science and math courses are the most problematic especially in today's push to limit community college credit allowance for graduation with a two year degree.
Human Issues

• Three reasons why a student would seek out additional education
  o 1 – its needed for advancement
  o 2 – There is a genuine interest in the material
  o 3 – Potentially both of the above

NBRC Continuing Competency Program (CCP)
NBRC Continuing Competency Program Effective July 1, 2002

• CE Credit – 30 hours/5 years
• Pass examination for highest credential
• Pass examination not previously completed

Continuing Competency Program

• Requires all individuals who earn an NBRC credential on or after July 1, 2002 to participate
• Credentials earned after July 1, 2002 are valid for five years
• Continuing Competency Program does not effect credentials earned prior to July 1, 2002, but individuals can voluntarily participate in the program
Continuing Competency Program
Requirements

• CE Credit – 30 hours/5 years
  o AARC CRCE approved courses
  o Respiratory care specific courses approved for state license renewal/continuing education
• Pass examination for highest credential held
• Pass examination not previously completed

CCP Implementation Actions

• General information is provided through the annual renewal process.
• Pending credential expiration notices provided as follows:
  o one year prior to expiration - official letter notice
  o six months prior to expiration - follow up reminder postcard
  o 90-days prior to expiration
  o 30 day prior to expiration – final reminder
CCP Continuing Education Submission

- Online process at www.nbrc.org
- Random audit
- Simple and easy
- Can renew via CE up until the day before credential expires

- AARC Members can transfer CRCE electronically!!

Questions?

- How to Contact the NBRC:
  - By Mail:
    - 10801 Mastin Street, Suite 300, Overland Park, KS 66210
  - By Phone:
    - 913-895-4900
  - By Email:
    - nbrc-info@nbrc.org
  - Online:
    - nbrc.org