

AARC Membership Update – 2015 and Beyond

May 31, 2012

This update is provided to avoid any confusion about the AARC's position related to 2015 and Beyond. The AARC Board of Directors has acted only on the recommendations identified within this report. Future actions by the Board will be reported to the membership as they occur.

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2015 and Beyond Project Background

The AARC Executive Director was directed by the AARC President to organize a series of conferences to address the following questions:

- What will the future health care system look like?
- What will the roles and responsibilities of respiratory therapists be in the future system?
- What competencies will be required for RTs to succeed in the future?
- How do we transition the profession from where it is today to where we need to be in the future?

To accomplish this goal, a planning group of individuals representing key stakeholders of the profession was selected to plan and implement a series of three conferences.

The first two questions were established as the goals for Conference I, which convened in the spring of 2008. A manuscript describing the outcomes of this conference was published in RESPIRATORY CARE in March of 2008.

Based on the findings of the first conference, a second conference was convened in the spring of 2009 to identify the competencies required to fulfill the roles previously identified. The envisioned competencies were embedded in a manuscript that included the conference proceedings published in RESPIRATORY CARE in May of 2010.

Following the publication of that manuscript, a third conference was convened in July 2010. This conference was to identify options for transitioning the profession to meet the envisioned future demands. A manuscript describing the proceedings of this conference and the recommendations of the conferee stakeholders has been published in the Journal.

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Actions taken at the December 2010 Board of Directors Meeting

Following the completion of the third conference, the AARC Executive Director provided the AARC Board of Directors with a final report of the three-conference project and recommendations for approval.

Recommendation #1

“That the ‘transition plan attributes’ be approved by the Board.”

The transition plan must:

- Maintain an adequate respiratory therapist workforce throughout the transition.
- Address unintended consequences such as respiratory therapist shortages.
- Require multiple options and flexibility in educating both students and the existing workforce (e.g., affiliation agreements, internships, special skills workshops, continuing education, etc.).
- Require competency documentation options for new graduates.
- Support a process of competency documentation for the existing workforce.
- Assure that credentialing and licensure recommendations evolve with changes in practice.
- Address implications of changes in licensing, credentialing and accreditation.
- Assure that emerging conference recommendations must be supported by a plurality of the stakeholders in attendance.
- Establish practical timelines for recommended actions.
- Reflect the outcomes of the previous two *2015 and Beyond* conferences.
- Identify the agencies most appropriate to implement identified elements.

This recommendation was amended to delete the following attribute:

- Assure that emerging conference recommendations must be supported by a plurality of the stakeholders in attendance.

Had this attribute been accepted by the Board, it would be unable to consider recommendations that failed to receive the support of the plurality of attendees. In rejecting this attribute, the Board will consider all recommendations brought forth from the conferences.

Board Action:

The Board unanimously accepted recommendation #1 as amended. Justification: This list of transition plan attributes was developed by the 2015 planning group prior to the third and final conference. These attributes provide assurance to all stakeholders that as we move forward, we will not create new problems to solve old ones. We must not create a new system that cannot adequately provide adequate numbers of graduates. By adhering to these attributes, we will

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consider virtually all tactics and strategies put forth while providing assurance of goal-directed change which will not only move the profession forward but also address the many challenges that may manifest in such a transition.

Recommendation #2

“That AARC Leadership after reviewing recommendations generated in Conference III identify additional research, additional communication needs, legal issues, including but not limited to legal credentialing, feasibility and other potential impact brought about by implementation of the recommendations.”

Board Action:

The Board unanimously accepted the recommendation. Justification: Even though several pre-Conference III surveys were conducted, the statistical power of many of these surveys does not permit generalization across the population being surveyed. While the surveys were useful in providing information on certain issues, these surveys should in no way be considered as the final research effort required to responsibly consider the recommendations.

Recommendation #3

“That if the transition plan attributes are approved by the Board, it conduct at minimum, a cursory crosswalk of Conference III recommendations with the attributes.”

Board Action:

The Board unanimously accepted the recommendation. Justification: Each of the recommendations emerging from Conference III will be evaluated to assure that if implemented, it will not violate the transition attributes. This will permit the Board to know how realistic some of these recommendations are at this point in time. It will also serve to inform the Board of all potential consequences, both negative and positive, as further consideration is given in the future.

Recommendation #4

“That AARC’s leadership use the next year to conduct a briefing/listening tour to provide key stakeholder groups with an opportunity to better understand the project and allow AARC to gain additional input before it takes action on the remaining recommendations.”

Board Action:

The Board unanimously accepted the recommendation. Justification: Visits with key stakeholder groups help everyone better understand the project and provide opportunity for additional input before the Board takes further action on recommendations generated by the Conference III stakeholder conferees. The AARC needs to carefully assess the impact of each potential

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approach to transition. Also, it is reasonable to assume that other ideas, tactics, and strategies would be generated by these groups.

The Ad Hoc Committee on 2015 and Beyond composed of members of the AARC Board of Directors was appointed to assure that these actions are addressed.

Activities during 2011 and 2012

During the summer and fall of 2011, AARC officials including the President, Past-President, and the Executive Director accepted invitations and met with key stakeholder groups including the National Network of Health Career Programs in Two-Year Colleges (NN2), The Association of Schools of Allied Health Professions (ASAHP) CoARC, NBRC, several state societies and several respiratory state licensing boards to help them better understand the project and allow the AARC to gain additional input before it takes action on the transition recommendations.

The Ad Hoc Committee on 2015 and Beyond began to examine transition recommendations from Conference III in light of the transition plan attributes previously approved by the Board of Directors. Their purpose was to evaluate whether the implementation of these recommendations would violate the required transition attributes and to determine additional information needed by the Board of Directors prior to taking action on the transition recommendations.

Two ad hoc committees, one comprised of program directors of associate degree programs (Committee on Associate Degree Respiratory Therapy Education (CoADRTE)) and the other consisting of the current CoBGRTE Steering Committee representing baccalaureate degree programs, were ratified by the AARC Board of Directors as formal sub-committees of the AARC Education Section. The purpose of both committees was to provide an infrastructure to provide information and guidance for policy recommendations regarding the *2015 and Beyond*. In the fall of 2011 both committees provided comments regarding the competencies for future respiratory therapists identified by the participants of the second conference.

In early 2012, Lynda Goodfellow, EdD, RRT, FAARC, and John Hiser, MEd, RRT, FAARC, were named as Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Committee on 2015 and Beyond. The committee completed its review of the recommendations from Conference III in light of the transition plan attributes previously approved by the Board of Directors. It also reviewed the available information and identified additional information needed by the Board of Directors prior to them taking action on the transition recommendations.

At its April 2012 meeting, the Board of Directors unanimously passed the following recommendations:

- “That the AARC BOD accept the direction for the future of health care as recommended by the publication ‘Creating a Vision for Respiratory Care in 2015 and Beyond’ by Robert M Kacmarek PhD RRT FAARC, Charles G Durbin MD FAARC, Thomas A Barnes EdD RRT

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FAARC, Woody V Kageler MD MBA, John R Walton MBA RRT FAARC, and Edward H O'Neil PhD Published – Respir Care 2009;54(3):375–389. © 2009 Daedalus Enterprises”

- “That the AARC Board of Directors directs the Management Section Chair to initiate a project to encourage respiratory care managers to look for, and seize, opportunities described in the manuscript entitled ‘Creating a Vision for Respiratory Care in 2015 and Beyond,’ Kacmarek, Durbin, Barnes, Kageler, Walton, O'Neil, Respiratory Care 2009; 54(3):375-389.”
- “That the AARC Executive Office develop a website dedicated to findings, processes, outcomes and decisions surrounding the AARC’s *2015 and Beyond Conference* and Project”

Activities occurring after the April 2012 Board of Directors’ meeting and planned activities during 2012

The Ad Hoc Committee on 2015 and Beyond has received and is now reviewing formal feedback on the transition recommendations from the third conference from the CoARC and NBRC. It is planning several additional surveys to be conducted during June for the purpose of clarifying previous survey results and obtaining additional information. These surveys will be distributed to the managers of respiratory therapy services in hospitals, to program directors of educational programs and to members of the Association of Schools of Allied Health Professions (ASAHP). Results of these surveys will be presented to the Board at their July meeting.

The Executive Office is designing a website that will contain the peer-reviewed papers, editorials and other information related to the *2015 and Beyond Project*. The purpose of this website is to promote continued transparency related to this project. This website is expected to be available this June and will be updated as additional information becomes available. It is anticipated that following the presentation of its final report to the Board in November, the Ad Hoc Committee on 2015 and Beyond will have provided the Board with the information needed to address the recommendations of the third conference and will be dissolved.

Following the July 2012 Board of Directors’ meeting, the Ad Hoc Committee on 2015 and Beyond will address any additional information requests from the Board and develop a final report to be presented to the Board at its November 2012 meeting.

Please send any questions or comments for the Ad Hoc Committee on 2015 and Beyond to dubbs@aacrc.org.