

## **American Association for Respiratory Care**

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### **Position Statement**

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# **The Role of the Respiratory Care Practitioner in the Provision of Respiratory Care Services in the Hospitals and Alternate Sites Scope of Practice**

The practice of respiratory care encompasses activities in: diagnostic evaluation, therapy, disease management and education of the patient, family and public. These activities are supported by education, research and administration.

Diagnostic activities include but are not limited to: (1) obtaining and analyzing physiological specimens; (2) interpreting physiological data; (3) performing tests and studies of the cardiopulmonary system; (4) performing neurophysiological studies, and (5) performing sleep disorder studies. Therapy includes but is not limited to application and monitoring of: (1) medical gases and environmental control systems; (2) mechanical ventilatory support; (3) artificial airway care; (4) bronchopulmonary hygiene; (5) pharmacological agents; (6) cardiopulmonary rehabilitation; and (7) hemodynamic cardiovascular support.

The focus of patient and family education activities is to promote knowledge and management of disease process, medical therapy and self-help. Public education activities focus on the promotion of cardiopulmonary wellness.

## **Practice Settings**

Elements of the scope of practice of respiratory care are performed in acute care hospitals and alternative sites where patient care is provided. Alternative sites include, but are not limited to; military and VA treatment facilities, physician offices, patients' homes, convalescent centers, clinics, skilled nursing facilities, and retirement centers.

The complexities of respiratory care are such that the public is at risk of injury and health care institutions are at risk of liability when respiratory care is provided by inadequately educated and unqualified health care providers rather than by practitioners with appropriate training and education.

## **Practitioner Qualifications**

Practitioners who provide respiratory care services shall demonstrate their ability to meet the educational and experience requirements for the safe delivery of respiratory care services through competency validation mechanisms established by either legislative or regulatory acts of their respective states or commonwealth, or through a validated voluntary credentialing mechanism endorsed by the National Commission for Health Certifying Agencies.

## **Position**

It is the position of the American Association for Respiratory Care that the respiratory care practitioner as a vital member of the health care team is essential to the provision of safe, appropriate, and cost-effective

patient care in acute-care hospitals and alternative patient care sites.

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