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COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION FOR RESPIRATORY CARE

Update on Standards for Degree Advancement Programs

Tom Smalling, PhD, RRT, RPFT, RPSGT, FAARC
Executive Director

Conflict of Interest

I have no real or perceived conflict of interest that relates to this presentation. Any use of brand names is not in any way meant to be an endorsement of a specific product, but to merely illustrate a point of emphasis.

CONGRESS 2014
The 60th International Respiratory Convention & Exhibition

Objectives

The presenter will
- Describe CoARC activities regarding development of standards for Degree Advancement Programs,
- Describe advantages for seeking voluntary accreditation for Degree Advancement Programs, and
- Discuss possible models for offering this type of program.

Purpose of Programmatic Accreditation

- To hold respiratory care programs accountable to the community of interest — the profession, consumers, employers, students and their families, practitioners— and to one another by ensuring that these programs have goals and outcomes that are appropriate to prepare individuals to fulfill their expected roles;
- To evaluate the success of a respiratory care program in achieving its goals and outcomes;
- To assess the extent to which a respiratory care program meets accreditation standards;
- To foster continuing improvement in respiratory care programs — and, thereby, in professional practice.

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Definition of Degree Advancement

- A degree advancement program is an educational program designed specifically to meet the needs of the practicing respiratory therapist with an RRT who, having already completed an accredited respiratory care program with an entry into respiratory care professional practice degree wishes to obtain advanced training in respiratory care.

- The Degree Advancement Standards are designed to recognize the competencies and value-added above and beyond the *entry into respiratory care professional practice* degree.

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Degree Advancement vs Entry Into Profession

- Degree advancement programs are different from *entry into respiratory care professional practice* programs in purpose, design and content.

- Entry into Professional Practice programs provide individuals with no respiratory care background or experience with the competencies needed to enter the profession, whereas degree advancement programs expand the depth and breadth of both knowledge and skills *beyond* that of an RRT entering the profession.

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Degree Advancement Program Development

- Development of an effective degree advancement program requires a thorough assessment of those education experiences typically offered at the *entry into respiratory care professional practice* degree level.

- Degree advancement programs will then be able to use this foundation to develop new, advanced, in-depth educational experiences designed to enhance the respiratory therapist's professional practice.

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Program Eligibility

- To become accredited by the CoARC, degree advancement programs must be established either in accredited postsecondary institutions, by a consortium of which one member must be an accredited postsecondary institution, or in facilities sponsored by the U.S. military (as defined in Standard DA1.1).

- All degree advancement students must be graduates of a CoARC-accredited *entry into respiratory care professional practice* degree program prior to entry into the program.

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Standard 1 – Program Administration and Sponsorship

- Institutional Accreditation
- Consortium
- Sponsor Responsibilities
- Substantive Changes

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Standard 2 – Institutional and Personnel Resources

- Institutional Resources
- Key Program Personnel
- Program Director
- Director of Clinical Education*
- Medical Advisor
- Instructional Faculty
- Administrative Support Staff
- Assessment of Program Resources

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Standard 3 – Program Goals, Outcomes, and Assessment

- Statement of Program Goals
- Advisory Committee
- Student Learning Outcomes
- Assessment of Program Goals
- Student Evaluation
- Inter-Rater Reliability
- Assessment of Program Outcomes
- Reporting Program Outcomes
- Clinical Site Evaluation

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Standard 4 – Curriculum

- Curriculum Consistent with Program Goals
- Curriculum Review & Revision to Meet Goals
- Professional Practice Competencies
- Length of Study
- Equivalency
- Clinical Practice

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Standard 5– Fair Practices and Recordkeeping

- Disclosure
- Public Information on Program Outcomes
- Non-discriminatory Practice
- Safeguards
- Academic Guidance
- Student and Program Records

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2015 DA Standards Timeline

- **Following November 2014 CoARC Board meeting:**
  - Disseminate a call for comment (with **Feb 1, 2015** deadline) to all communities of interest and outline the procedure for those wishing to provide input;
  - Revise Standards, Evidence of Compliance, and Interpretive Guidelines (incorporated into document);
  - Recommend revisions will be reviewed by full Board at its March 2015 meeting;
- Send approved Standards to collaborating organizations for endorsement after March 2015;
- Publish endorsed Standards by May 2015;
- Anticipate accepting applications by July 2015.

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Resources and Possible Models

- No single curricular model fits best:
  - Tailored to meet program goals, institutional mission, community needs, and student professional goals;
  - Programs can offer one or more specific tracks (clinical, education, research, or management);
  - No single, nationally-accepted competencies;
  - Curriculum must be primarily focused on respiratory care to meet accreditation Standards.
- Majority of programs deliver curriculum through distance-based learning methods to allow greater flexibility for practicing respiratory therapists to attend classes;
- CoARC maintains a list of DA programs on its website.

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Questions and Answers

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