



COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION FOR RESPIRATORY CARE

CoARC Update on Response to COVID-19

November 19, 2020

The Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC) is continuing to monitor the impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on our accredited programs. We are fully aware of the ongoing efforts of administrators and faculty to provide effective educational experiences for their students during this difficult and uncertain time. The CoARC also supports all programmatic actions focused on sustaining the health, safety and security of students, faculty, patients, and other stakeholders.

Flexibility with Programmatic Changes is Extended through June 30, 2021

CoARC recognizes that, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, many of its accredited programs have made changes in delivery modes, facility access, grading methods, and /or other educational elements that the CoARC reviews to assure compliance with its Accreditation Standards and Policies. Through the above date, the CoARC will continue to allow programs to use whatever methods they deem appropriate/necessary for them to meet the outcomes mandated by the Standards. However, should the pandemic crisis wind down before this date, programs need to return to pre-pandemic processes/status as soon as practicable. Any changes that will become or have been made permanent, for whatever reason, must be reported to the CoARC Executive Office as outlined in Section 9 [Substantive Changes] of the CoARC Accreditation Policies and Procedures Manual (www.coarc.com).

Accreditation Review Process through June 30, 2021

CoARC is closely monitoring the newly instigated Virtual Site Visit (VSV) process and collecting feedback from both site visitors and programs to ensure that these reviews are conducted with high levels of integrity and quality. The CoARC is planning to conduct VSVs for all program types through at least June 30, 2021, when such a visit is approved by the CoARC Chief Executive Officer (CEO) after consultation with the program's Referee. This will include program types that were previously excluded from the VSV criteria, as stated in our July 30 COVID-19 Update (i.e., programs seeking accreditation, programs on Provisional Accreditation, and programs with progress reports or sub-threshold outcomes). The CoARC reserves the right to conduct a focused, on-site visit following a VSV if it determines such action is warranted. As always, do not hesitate to reach out to [Bonnie Marrs](#) (817-283-2835 ext. 102) with any questions and concerns about an upcoming Accreditation Review for your program.

These extensions are in recognition of the continuing disruption to respiratory care education related to the pandemic. The CoARC will remain vigilant in supporting its accredited programs and will provide additional guidance as the situation warrants. For questions regarding this communication, please contact [Tom Smalling](#), Chief Executive Officer, at 817- 283-2835 ext. 101. CoARC COVID-19 updates are posted on a dedicated page on the [CoARC website](#).