

AARC Statement of Continuing Professional Education

It is critical for all health care practitioners to participate in continuing education in order to enhance their knowledge, improve their clinical practice and meet state licensure and national credentialing requirements. Participation in continuing education, whether mandatory or voluntary, allows each health care professional the opportunity to refine skills to improve patient care; stay current with standards of care; gain professional growth; and learn effective health care team skills and provide the highest quality patient care throughout their career. The American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC) encourages respiratory therapists to select continuing education activities relevant to their personal and professional needs. Continuing education may also include degree advancement, for those individuals who have completed the required entry-level education to pursue baccalaureate and graduate degrees relevant to their professional pursuits. There are multiple continuing education opportunities, both in-person, live or online, that may be applicable to individual continuing education: webinars, lectures, panel, workshops, and seminars/conferences.

The AARC recognizes the value of, and need for, participation in continuing education and recommends that practitioners participate in educational activities on a continual basis. AARC members may utilize the Continuing Respiratory Care Education (CRCE) system as the mechanism for recognition and documentation of such activities. In 2020 the National Board for Respiratory Care (NBRC) launched its Credential Maintenance Program, which requires credentialed respiratory therapists prove on-going competency in order to stay abreast of changes in methodologies, technologies and industry standards in a timelier manner.

Providers of continuing education activities (which can include clinical institutions, educational institutions, public and private associations or organizations, and proprietary corporations) are encouraged to conduct needs assessments in order to design and develop valuable educational activities that will enable practitioners to meet their professional goals. In addition, providers of continuing education are encouraged to review, evaluate and measure their activities' effectiveness. Providers are also urged to use instructional technology, incorporate multiple learning styles, current research-based learning and assessment theories, and foster critical thinking to promote effective learning. The AARC offers FAQ's for course sponsors to help design and evaluate continuing education course: <http://www.aarc.org/education/continuing-education-program-application/education-faqs-course-sponsors/>

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