

I am pleased to provide you with a report of the actions taken by your board of directors related to the 2015 and Beyond Project at its recent meeting in Las Vegas, NV.

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?

He selected a planning group of individuals representing key stakeholders of the profession to plan and implemented a series of 3 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 is now being prepared and will be submitted to *Respiratory Care*.

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 his 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 that were brought forth at the conference

Board Action:

The board unanimously accepted the recommendation as amended. This list of transition plan attributes was developed by the 2015 planning group prior to the third and final conference. These attributes will 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 which cannot adequately provide adequate numbers of graduates. By adhering to these attributes we will 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 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. Even though we conducted several pre-Conference 3 surveys, the statistical power of many of these surveys does not permit generalization across the population being surveyed. While the surveys were useful in giving us a feel for certain issues, these surveys should in no way be considered as the ultimate research 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. Each of the recommendations emerging from Conference 3 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 recommendation.”

Board Action:

The board unanimously accepted the recommendation. During the next year we will visit with key stakeholder groups to help them better understand the project and gain additional input from them before it takes action on recommendations generated by the Conference 3 stakeholder conferees. The AARC needs to carefully assess the impact of each potential approach to transition. Also, it is reasonable to assume that other ideas, tactics, and strategies will be generated by these groups. Moreover, we recognize the concerns of all stakeholders and should do everything possible to promote clarity and understanding by all parties

Closing Comments:

I have appointed an ad hoc committee composed of members of the AARC Board of Directors to assure that these actions are addressed in 2011.

I hope this information is helpful in clarifying your understanding what has been done to address the future needs of the profession and the initiatives that will be conducted during 2011 to help assure a smooth transition of the respiratory therapist workforce to meet those needs.