

Guidance Document on Scope of Practice

The American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC) is aware that a credentialing examination is required by law in states that have a respiratory care practice act.

The American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC) has received several inquiries regarding its opinion of competency documentation for persons who possess credentials other than Certified Respiratory Therapists (CRT) and Registered Respiratory Therapists (RRT) for the purpose of permitting these individuals to provide part of the scope of practice for respiratory therapists as described in respiratory care practice acts throughout the United States.

The AARC believes that to ensure safe and effective care for all consumers requiring respiratory therapy, documentation of the provider's competency to do so must possess the same rigor and validity as the examination processes that CRTs and RRTs must undergo in order to achieve their respective credentials.

The credentialing examinations for CRT and RRT are accredited by the National Organization for Competency Assurance's (NOCA) accrediting arm, the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). The AARC recognizes that the credentialing examinations for Certified Pulmonary Function Technologist (CPFT), Registered Pulmonary Function Technologist (RPFT), and the Registered Polysomnographic Technologist (RPSGT) have also been accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), assuring that these examinations are valid and reliable measures of competence within the limits of their respective examination matrices. The AARC, therefore, supports recognition of individuals with the aforementioned credentials for the purposes of providing care which includes a subsection of the respiratory therapy scope of practice with the caveat that such provision be limited to the elements contained within each credentialing examination's matrix respectively.

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